

SPORTSMAN'S PARADISE LAND EXCHANGE

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT



Arizona – Yuma Field Office

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The BLM's multiple-use mission is to sustain the health and productivity of public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

The Bureau accomplishes this by managing such activities as outdoor recreation, livestock grazing, mineral development, and energy production, and by conserving natural, historical, cultural, and other resources on public lands.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

APN	Assessor's Parcel Number
ASTM	American Society for Testing and Materials
ATI	Agreement to Initiate
BE	Biological Evaluation
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CNDDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
EA	Environmental Assessment
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FLPMA	Federal Land Policy and Management Act
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NOEP	Notice of Exchange Proposal
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
PFYC	Potential Fossil Yield Potential Classification
RV	Recreational Vehicle
RMP	Resource Management Plan
ROD	Record of Decision
ROW	Right-of-way
SPI	Sportsman's Paradise Incorporated
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USGS	United States Geological Survey
U.S.C.	United States Code
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife
VRM	Visual Resource Management
YFO	Yuma Field Office

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SECTION 1 – PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION

1.1 Introduction and Background

The U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Yuma Field Office (YFO) prepared this Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed Sportsman's Paradise Incorporated (SPI) Land Exchange. This EA complies with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (Public Law 91-190), the Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing NEPA, and the BLM NEPA Handbook (BLM Handbook H-1790-1). NEPA requires federal agencies to consider the environmental impacts of a Proposed Action before implementing the action. This EA describes the proposed land exchange, the purpose and need for the land exchange, identifies public issues and management concerns, describes the alternatives considered, and describes the affected environment for the parcels proposed for exchange. In addition, this EA analyzes the potential environmental consequences of the proposed exchange of BLM-administered land for non-federal land and its consistency with the January 2010 YFO Resource Management Plan (RMP). If the BLM determines no significant impacts would result from the proposed land exchange, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) would be issued and the proposed land exchange could proceed. If the BLM determines significant impacts would result, preparation of an environmental impact statement would be required or the proposed land exchange would be modified to avoid significant impacts. The BLM prepared a feasibility analysis report for the proposed land exchange on March 21, 2008 and on April 14, 2008, the BLM and SPI executed an Agreement to Initiate (ATI).

According to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in *United States of America v. Iva May Harvey*, 661 F.2d 767 (1981), the construction of residential properties on the federal parcel occurred as a result of the movement of the Colorado River. The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals noted that when the deed was issued in 1914 for area containing the federal parcel, currently known as Harvey's Fishing Hole, the area was located south of the Colorado River in Arizona. However, during this time the Colorado River was flowing through and changing the land features of the area, eventually washing away the majority of the land on the Arizona side of the Colorado River while simultaneously depositing new river sediment on the California side (BLM 1994). This newly deposited land was surveyed and included in the State of California and, because this newly naturally created land area was contiguous to existing federally owned lands, these new lands became the property of the adjoining landowner, the United States Government (BLM 1994). However, as these newly created lands were forming in the State of California, the Arizona landowner presumed ownership and sold a portion of the now federally owned land. The Harvey family, the party responsible for developing the property as a residential development, acquired the land in 1952. The United States Government notified the occupants of Harvey's Fishing Hole that it claimed title to the land and offered the occupants permits to legalize their occupancy. When the occupants refused to sign the permits the United States Government initiated trespass actions and brought the Harvey's Fishing Hole case to the United States District Court in San Diego (BLM 1994). The United States District Court affirmed federal ownership of the parcel and awarded damages to the United States; the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals subsequently upheld this decision in 1981. Instead of forcing the residents to vacate the property, the Secretary of the Interior approved the issuance of limited-term 10-year residential leases to the occupants of Harvey's Fishing Hole. The BLM subsequently extended these residential leases (via 1 to 3-year lease extensions).

1.2 Proposed Action

The BLM would exchange one parcel of BLM-administered land for five parcels of non-federal land. All of the parcels proposed for exchange are located in the BLM YFO in Imperial County, California along the Colorado River corridor, south of Palo Verde.

The BLM-administered parcel consists of 27.82 acres and is located in the area known as Harvey's Fishing Hole on the Colorado River. A residential development currently exists on the parcel, and the BLM leases the parcel to individual occupants (collectively represented here by SPI).

The five parcels of non-federal land owned by SPI are undeveloped and include a total of 225.85 acres. The non-federal land is a mix of desert shrubland and riparian vegetation communities surrounding an oxbow lake formed by a side channel of the Colorado River. Past surface disturbance (agricultural activities) occurred on some of the parcels, though they are not currently under cultivation.

Appendix A identifies the locations of the parcels proposed for exchange and includes site photos.

1.3 Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action

Section 206 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976 (43 USC 1716), as amended, authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to dispose of public land and interest therein by exchange when it is determined that the public interest is well served by making the exchange. When considering an exchange of federal and non-federal land, the BLM must evaluate how the exchange would serve the public interest, review and approve a land appraisal to establish equal market value, conduct a detailed environmental analysis and documentation, and coordinate with state and local governments and affected property and public interests.

The need for the Proposed Action is to acquire, through exchange, non-federal lands with high resource values that will facilitate better management of existing public lands and protect the resource values from degradation resulting from commercial or residential development (BLM 2010a).

The BLM will decide whether or not the land exchange is in the public's best interest, and if so, under what conditions.

1.4 Public Participation

1.4.1 Notice of Exchange Proposal

The BLM YFO published a Notice of Exchange Proposal (NOEP) for the SPI EA in the Palo Verde Valley Times on June 18 and 25, 2008 and July 2 and 9, 2008. The NOEP provided public notice that BLM was considering the land exchange with SPI, described the federal land considered for disposal and non-federal lands considered for acquisition. The NOEP invited public comment on the proposed land exchange for a period of 45 days after the first date of publication. During that time, the BLM received five written comment documents regarding the proposed land exchange from two state agencies, a utility provider, and two Native American Indian tribes. None of the five comments submitted expressed support or opposition to the proposed land exchange, but instead identified issues for analysis in the EA. Section 1.5 discusses the issues identified in these comments.

1.4.2 Scoping

The BLM notified the public of the preparation of the SPI EA and of the opportunity to submit scoping comments through a press release published on the BLM Arizona website on July 27, 2010 and an announcement in the Palo Verde Valley Times published on July 21, 2010. While there was no official scoping period, the BLM held one public meeting and encouraged members of the public to submit comments early in the process to help guide development of the EA. The BLM will continue to consider comments received throughout the EA process.

Public involvement, which includes external scoping, is required in some form during the preparation of all EAs (BLM Handbook H-1790-1). The purpose of scoping, both external public scoping and internal agency scoping, is to identify issues, potential effects, and alternatives for analysis in the EA.

The BLM held one public meeting on August 3, 2010 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at Palo Verde Community College in Blythe, California to solicit in-person public input on the project. Twenty-four individuals attended the meeting. The meeting was an open house style format that allowed attendees to learn about the issues and ask questions at their own pace. The BLM project manager and project interdisciplinary team attended the meeting to answer questions. In addition, the BLM provided an informational handout and comment form and displayed several boards displaying maps of the location of the proposed land exchange.

The BLM received 25 written scoping comment documents regarding the project. Of those comments, the public submitted 21 during the public scoping meeting and submitted 4 via standard mail. Appendix B includes copies of all the comment documents. Table 1 identifies the number of comments received by geographic location.

Table 1. Comment Documents Received by Geographic Location

Geographic Location	Zip Code	Number of Comment Documents
Westminster, Colorado	80031	1
Glenwood Springs, Colorado	81601	1
Scottsdale, Arizona	85255	2
Payson, Arizona	85541	1
Lakewood, California	90715	1
Lomita, California	90717	1
San Pedro, California	90732	1
Diamond Bar, California	91765	1
Blythe, California	92225, 92226	15
Garden Grove, California	92840	1

All comments received during public scoping expressed some form of support for the potential land exchange. Some commenters expressed their full support for the land exchange while others simply encouraged the BLM to consider the land exchange action. No comments indicated opposition to the proposed land exchange.

Several commenters described their personal family history associated with Harvey's Fishing Hole. Many commenters stated that they had lived and enjoyed the area at Harvey's Fishing Hole for decades and would like to claim legal title to the land. Some of these commenters expressed a desire for their

descendents to have the opportunity to enjoy the area as they had in their past. Most commenters stated that the land exchange should move forward as quickly as possible.

Many commenters noted the benefits of the exchange for the BLM, residents at Sportsman's Paradise, and the nearby communities. Several commenters pointed to the socioeconomic benefits of the exchange, including more tax revenue for local governments and improved quality of life for area residents. The continued ability of area residents to recreate along the river at Sportsman's Paradise was a common concern. Some commenters discussed the benefits of the exchange for the management of BLM-administered land and the area's resources. A few commenters stated that the land exchange would benefit the environment and another noted the land the BLM would acquire would provide habitat for wildlife. Commenters also noted the exchange would provide many acres of wetlands and water access along with large areas of open space that would help the BLM protect the area's natural resources.

1.5 Issues

The BLM summarized the comments received during the NOEP comment period and during the scoping period into eight broad project issues, written in the form of questions. The questions encapsulate the broad issues and opportunities identified during the NOEP and scoping comment periods.

- How will the land exchange affect existing and future water and water use?
- How will the land exchange consider existing rights-of-way (ROWs)?
- What will be the affect of the land exchange on cultural resources and Native American concerns in the area?
- What will be the affect of the land exchange on recreational access?
- How will the land exchange affect local social and economic conditions?
- How will the land exchange affect the management of animal and plant habitat?
- How will the land exchange affect the BLM's management of wetland and riparian areas?

SECTION 2 – ALTERNATIVES INCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION

2.1 Introduction

The BLM analyzed two alternatives in detail, the proposed land exchange (Proposed Action) and the continuation of the existing ownership and management (No Action Alternative). The BLM also considered, but removed from detailed analysis, an alternative to manage a portion of the existing federal parcel as a concession.

2.2 Alternatives Considered in Detail

Proposed Action

The BLM would acquire, through exchange, five parcels of non-federal land totaling 225.85 acres for one parcel of BLM-administered land consisting of 27.82 acres. The exchange would include both surface and mineral estate, with the exception of mineral estate on Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 006-020-52-01 (40 acres). If needed in order to equalize the agreed-upon values of the lands and/or interests in lands involved in the proposed exchange to the maximum extent possible, SPI would modify the exchange proposal by adding or excluding lands and/or interests in lands or by using cash equalization payments not to exceed 25 percent of the value. All of the parcels proposed for exchange are located in Imperial County, California, along the Colorado River, south of Palo Verde. Appendix A identifies the locations of the parcels proposed for exchange.

Federal Land

The BLM-administered parcel is located in an area known as Harvey's Fishing Hole on the Colorado River. The residential development on the parcel is allowed to remain under residential leases issued by the BLM to individual occupants. The legal description of the federal parcel is:

- Lot 12, Section 9, T. 9 S., R. 22 E., Imperial County, California, San Bernardino Meridian, totaling 27.82 acres.

Under the Proposed Action, the surface and mineral estate on the federal land would be conveyed to SPI.

Non-Federal Land

The five parcels of non-federal (privately owned) land offered by SPI under the Proposed Action are primarily undeveloped. These parcels contain a mix of desert shrubland and riparian vegetation communities on an oxbow lake formed by a side channel of the Colorado River. The legal descriptions of the five parcels are:

- Section 11, E½ SE¼ and NW¼ SE¼, T. 9 S., R. 21 E., San Bernardino Meridian, Imperial County, California, totaling 96.85 acres, more or less. Excepting any portion of the land within the natural bed of the Colorado River below the line of ordinary high water mark where it was located prior to any artificial or avulsive changes in the location on the riverbed. (APN 006-210-23-01)
- Section 11, SW¼ SE¼ and SE¼ SW¼, T. 9 S., R. 21 E., San Bernardino Meridian, Imperial County, California, totaling 76.5 acres, more or less. Excepting from said land that portion conveyed to the State of California by deed recorded February 5, 1963, in Book 1135, page 431 of Official Records. Also, excepting any portion of the land within the natural bed of the Colorado River below the line

Section 2 – Alternatives Including the Proposed Action

of ordinary high water mark where it was located prior to any artificial or avulsive changes in the location on the riverbed. (APN 006-210-24-01 and APN 006-210-11-01)

- Section 12, NE¼ SW¼, San Bernardino Meridian, Imperial County, California, totaling 40 acres. (APN 006-020-52-01)
- Section 12, S½ SW¼, San Bernardino Meridian, Imperial County, California, totaling 12.5 acres. (APN 006-020-51-01).

With one exception, acquisition of the non-federal land includes surface and mineral estates. As noted above the non-federal lands are undeveloped and contain greater wildlife habitat values than the federal land. Public access to the oxbow lake and developed recreation sites are available via the adjacent Imperial County Palo Verde Park; the BLM is not proposing the development of additional recreational facilities.

In accordance with the YFO Record of Decision (ROD) and Approved RMP (BLM 2010a), the BLM would “[m]anage all acquired lands in accordance with the Approved RMP decisions for surrounding or adjacent BLM-administered lands.” Consistent with nearby BLM-administered lands and other decisions in the ROD and Approved RMP, key management in the non-federal parcels, if acquired, would include that described in Table 2.

Table 2. Management of Non-Federal Parcels under the Proposed Action

Management Type	Acquired Property Management
Wildlife Management, Vegetation and Invasive Species Management, Special Status Species Management	The decisions from the ROD that refer to Wildlife Management, Vegetation and Invasive Species Management, and Special Status Species Management would be applied to the acquired lands.
Livestock Grazing	Unavailable for livestock grazing
Recreation	Colorado River Corridor Destination Special Recreation Management Area Ehrenberg-Cibola Recreation Management Zone <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Objective is to maintain the wide range of water-based and off-highway vehicle based recreational opportunities for the public’s enjoyment. The facilities at the Ehrenberg Sandbowl and Oxbow Recreation and Wildlife Area are maintained and upgraded as needed to meet recreational demands and public health and safety requirements.• A majority of the Recreation Management Zone is undeveloped, providing some of the last remaining opportunities for isolated and unconfined recreation along the lower Colorado River.• Focus recreation management within the Ehrenberg-Cibola Recreation Management Zone to provide sustainable opportunities for camping, fishing, boating, swimming, off-highway vehicle riding, hunting, horseback riding, and wildlife viewing.
Travel Management	Limited
Visual Resources	Visual Resource Management Class III
Rights-of-way	Proposed ROWs would be evaluated on a case by case basis

Source: BLM 2010a

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the land exchange would not occur and there would be no change in land tenure.

Federal Land

The federal parcel would remain under federal jurisdiction managed by the BLM in accordance with the YFO ROD and Approved RMP (BLM 2010a). The 3-year residential occupancy leases granted by the BLM to individual residents of Harvey's Fishing Hole (with one year extensions available at the discretion of the Authorized Officer) would continue in the short term. However, under the current lease terms, these residential occupancy leases may not be extended beyond 2017. In addition, leases could also be revoked earlier due to noncompliance with the terms and conditions of the lease. Under the No Action Alternative, as these leases expire or are terminated, structures and related improvements would be removed by the lessees (or by the BLM at the lessees' expense). While the leases remain in effect, the residents of Harvey's Fishing Hole would be bound by the lease terms, including the following environmental protections and use restrictions:

- Comply with Federal, State and county laws and regulations pertaining to the prevention of pollution of any water or of waters of the Colorado River with sewage and other noxious substances.
- Comply with air and water quality standards established pursuant to applicable Federal or State law.
- Minimize damage to fish and wildlife habitat and to scenic, cultural and aesthetic values and otherwise protect the environment.
- Maintain the leased premises in a sanitary, neat and orderly condition at all times, including the removal of debris, weeds, and other unsightly or unsafe conditions.
- Prevent and suppress brush and grass fires and prevent pollution of waters on or near the vicinity of the leased land.
- Comply with State standards for public health and safety, environmental protection and operation and maintenance of, or for, such use if those standards are more stringent than applicable Federal standards.

Non-Federal Land

The BLM would not acquire the non-federal parcels, and these lands would remain under private ownership. Restrictions on use and environmental protections that apply to lands under federal management would not apply to these parcels.

2.3 Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Detailed Analysis

The BLM considered but eliminated from detailed analysis an alternative to not enter into a land exchange with SPI and instead manage a portion of the Harvey's Fishing Hole area as a concession lease. The BLM authorizes concession leases under 43 CFR 2920 and the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act, and allow the operation of recreation-oriented services and facilities by the private sector on BLM-administered lands in support of BLM recreation program goals. Concession leases authorize a concessionaire to carry out for-profit business activities in exchange for a fee. The Ehrenberg-Cibola Recreation Area Management Plan (BLM 1994) discussed creating a concession to provide boat-launching facilities, day- and overnight- use areas, fishing, parking, and other land-based recreational facilities. The BLM published a request for proposals for such a concession. However, only two parties expressed interest, the exchange proponent (SPI) and Mr. Rick Holloway; Mr. Holloway later stated that he was not interested and withdrew his proposal. Because of the lack of competition at that time, the BLM did not move forward with the

concession proposal from SPI. The BLM has not received additional requests to reconsider the area as a concession and therefore does not consider such a concession a viable option for the project area.

2.4 Conformance to and Consistency with the Yuma Field Office Resource Management Plan

2.4.1 Federal Land

The exchange proposal is consistent with the provisions in the YFO ROD and Approved RMP (BLM 2010a), which states that all public lands will be retained, unless specifically identified for disposal. The Approved RMP specifically identifies Lot 12, Section 9, T. 9 S., R. 22 E., Imperial County, California, San Bernardino Meridian as available for disposal, and therefore the Proposed Action would not require an RMP amendment.

2.4.2 Non-Federal Land

The non-federal lands contain natural resource values identified as priorities for acquisition in the YFO ROD and Approved RMP (BLM 2010a). The ROD and Approved RMP lists as part of the BLM's desired future conditions the acquisition of lands that include significant natural resource values. To facilitate this future condition, the YFO Approved RMP also includes specific management actions relating to the acquisition of lands with specific important natural resource values. Natural resource values listed in the ROD and Approved RMP as targets for land acquisitions that are relevant to the Proposed Action include:

- Raptor habitat along the Colorado River corridor
- Areas with high actual or potential value for non-game migratory bird habitat
- Suitable Southwestern willow flycatcher habitat.

The non-federal parcels proposed for exchange includes these natural resource values. Section 3, Affected Environment, includes detailed descriptions of the resource values on the federal and non-federal parcels.

SECTION 3 – AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

3.1 Introduction

Section 3 describes the affected environment in the federal and non-federal parcels relevant to understanding the discussion of the environmental consequences of the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative presented in Section 4 of this EA. Where applicable, the affected environment for the federal and non-federal parcels is discussed separately.

The BLM determined several resources were not relevant to the Proposed Action or the No Action alternatives and therefore, these resources are not analyzed in this document, including: Air Quality and Climate Change, Wild Horses and Burros, Prime and Unique Farmland, and Special Designations (i.e., Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, National Historic or Recreation Trails, National Byways, or Wilderness Areas). These resource and land uses are either not present in or adjacent to the project area (e.g., special designations, prime and unique farmland, and wild horse and burro herd areas) or were determined to not be relevant to the Proposed Action or No Action Alternative (e.g., Air Quality and Climate Change).

3.2 Soil and Geology

The Natural Resources Conservation Service classifies the soils on the federal and non-federal parcels as Entisols and Fluvents (USDA NRCS 1994). These soils have recently developed, have limited or poorly developed soil horizons, and generally form in loam or clay alluvial deposits near rivers. The terrain in the project area is relatively level, with a gradual incline to the north and elevations ranging approximately from 220 to 250 feet above mean sea level (CRM TECH 2010).

Geologically, the Palo Verde Valley is an alleviated valley that developed as an erosional feature along the course of the Colorado River (Jennings 1967). Jennings (1967) mapped the surface geology of the entire project area as Quaternary alluvium (Qal) containing sand, silt, clay, and gravel. Alluvium in the area has been laid down by flooding of the Colorado River. Pockets of older alluvium are Pleistocene in age with desert pavement and desert varnish. An updated version of Jennings (1977) included in the 2010 Geologic Map of California describes the deposits as “alluvium, lake, playa, and terrace deposits; unconsolidated and semi-consolidated” (Jennings 1977).

3.3 Mineral Resources

The potential for salable minerals (e.g., sand and gravel) is low for the federal and non-federal parcels, and these parcels contain no potential for leasable (e.g., oil and gas) and locatable (e.g., gold or uranium) minerals. The Lands and Realty section discusses mineral sales, leasing and claims, and the transfer of mineral estate.

3.4 Paleontology

The BLM’s Potential Fossil Yield Potential Classification (PFYC) system consists of five classes to describe known fossil yield and field conditions (BLM 2007). These classes range from Class 1, which has the lowest potential for yielding fossils, to Class 5, which has the highest potential of producing significant fossils. Based on the geologic and paleontological findings in a 2010 assessment of paleontological potential on the federal and non-federal parcels (ICF International 2010a), potential fossil yield for the project area is low.

This assessment is based the Quaternary age of the geology in the project area (a time of sand, silt, clay, and gravel deposition), the recent appearance of the fluvial and alluvial deposits (which would have disturbed or covered fossils), and a lack of identifiable Pleistocene deposits or older bedrock in the immediate area that would be more likely to contain fossils. With these geologic conditions, the project area was recommended as PFYC Class 2 due to no significant fossils and the age of geological units less than 10,000 years before present. Using the guidelines identified in Instruction Memorandum No. 2009-01, Attachment 1 *Guidelines for Assessment and Mitigation of Potential Impacts to Paleontological Resources* (BLM 2008a) and based on the lack of known fossil localities, additional research and field surveys were found to be unwarranted.

3.5 Water

Federal Land

The project area, including the non-federal parcels, is located in the Lower Colorado River Region and the Imperial Reservoir sub-basin (BLM 2008b).

The BLM-administered parcel is located on the north bank of the lower Colorado River, abutting, but not including, the 100-year floodplain for the river (FEMA 2008). The Colorado River begins in the State of Colorado and ends in Mexico when it enters the Gulf of California. The northern boundary of the parcel abuts a levee and irrigation canal.

Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act requires California and other states to evaluate and make lists of waters that are not meeting water quality standards after application of the best available pollution control technology. For those waters on the Section 303(d) list, the state must develop a total maximum daily load for the water pollutant and determines the contributions from point sources and nonpoint sources. The portion of the Colorado River and the canal adjacent to the federal parcel are not 303(d) listed water bodies in either Arizona or California (California State Water Resources Control Board 2010; Arizona DEQ 2010).

Water rights for the federal and non-federal parcels are discussed in the lands and realty section of this document.

Non-Federal Land

Two parcels of the non-federal land contain portions of an oxbow lake formed by a former channel of the Colorado River (Appendix A); however, none of these parcels abut the active river channel. The oxbow lake is not a 303(d) listed waterbody in either Arizona or California (California State Water Resources Control Board 2010; Arizona DEQ 2010). All five of the non-federal parcels are located within the 100-year floodplain of the Colorado River (FEMA 2008).

Additionally, Canal C-28 runs through the western portion of APN 006-210-24 and APN 006-210-23 (Arizona DEQ 2010). This canal is listed on California's Clean Water Act section 303(d) list for the pollutant Toxaphene, emanating from an unknown source (California State Water Resources Control Board 2010). Toxaphene is a persistent and bioaccumulative insecticide that was used from 1947 to 1980, primarily on cotton plants in the southern United States (U.S. EPA 2010).

3.6 Wildlife

Biologists conducted a general wildlife survey on the lands proposed for exchange in May 2010 and prepared a report to document the findings (ICF International 2011a). The report documented the wildlife

habitat, habitat elements, and wildlife observations on the parcels. Prior to conducting the survey, biologists reviewed existing information to determine the plant and animal species that were likely to occur in the area. Information reviewed included:

- Aerial photographs
- Topographic map of the project area (USGS, Palo Verde, CA-AZ, 7.5 minute topographic quadrangle)
- The California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) for the Palo Verde, CA and surrounding eight USGS quadrangles (CNDDB 2010)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) species list for Imperial County (USFWS 2010)
- eBird database (eBird 2010).

During the survey, biologists recorded wildlife observations and took photographs of the vegetation communities (ICF International 2011a). In addition, the biologists recorded other wildlife species while conducting special status species surveys on the federal and non-federal parcels during May, June, and July 2010. See the Special Status Species section for information on threatened and endangered species in the project area.

Wildlife Habitat

Federal Land

The BLM-administered parcel contains a residential development with minimal potential habitat for wildlife. Vegetation generally consists of lawn, ornamental trees, and shrubs. There are also areas of bare soil and a camping area that is vegetated with a mix of ornamental shrubs, salt cedar (*Tamarix ramosissima*), and saltbush (*Atriplex sp.*). The banks of the river are channelized and stabilized with rip-rap in some areas. The river bank is mostly developed with boat docks and piers, with areas of salt cedar along the river's edge. The top of the bank is mostly covered in lawn, ornamental trees, and residential development.

Non-Federal Land

The non-federal parcels are largely undeveloped with wildlife habitat ranging from low to high quality. Low to moderate quality wildlife habitat areas occur along the irrigation canal banks, roads, and adjacent to agricultural fields. An irrigation canal runs north to south through APN 006-210-24 and APN 006-210-23. The banks of the irrigation canal are mostly unvegetated with no emergent vegetation growing along its margins. Highway 78 separates APN 006-210-11 and APN 006-210-24. There is evidence of past agricultural activities at the north end of APN 006-210-23 and APN 006-020-52. Wildlife was observed on the non-federal parcels via direct observations and physical signs.

The highest quality wildlife habitat occurs in the areas immediately adjacent to the oxbow lake on APN 006-210-23 and APN 006-210-24. These parcels contain portions of the oxbow lake which is fed by water from the active channel of the Colorado River through a culvert. This habitat area provides roosting, foraging, and nesting habitat for several bird species, as well as habitat for mammals and reptiles. The oxbow lake consists of open water with areas of emergent vegetation along the margins and riparian scrub on the banks. This emergent vegetation is dominated by cattails (*Typha sp.*) and bank vegetation is dominated by salt cedar, Emory's baccharis (*Baccharis emoryi*), and shrubby willows (*Salix spp.*) with a few cottonwood trees (*Populus fremontii*). This area of the non-federal parcels offers wildlife habitat that is protected from

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human intrusion due to thick salt cedar and arrowweed (*Pluchea sericea*) as well as structured habitat, access to a water source, and foraging opportunities.

The remaining areas within the non-federal parcels are dominated by desert scrub habitat, consisting primarily of many-fruit saltbush (*Atriplex pycarpa*), creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*), iodine bush (*Allenrolfea occidentalis*), screw bean mesquite (*Psoralea arguta*), arrowweed, and salt cedar.

General Wildlife Species

Table 3 lists the wildlife species observed during the surveys in May, June, and July 2010. In all, 1 amphibian, 3 reptiles, 70 bird species (including migratory birds), and 8 mammal species were observed on the parcels proposed for exchange. These totals do not include threatened and endangered species, which are described in the Special Status Species section.

Table 3. Wildlife Species Observed during 2010 Surveys

Species	Observations
Amphibian	
Bullfrog (<i>Rana catesbeiana</i>)	X
Reptiles	
Common Side-blotched Lizard (<i>Uta stansburiana</i>)	X
Western Fence Lizard (<i>Scelepous occidentalis</i>)	X
Great Basin Whiptail (<i>Cnemidophorus tigris tigris</i>)	X
Birds	
Mallard (<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>)	X ¹
Canada Goose (<i>Branta canadensis</i>)	X ¹
Gambel's Quail (<i>Callipepla gambelii</i>)	X
Pied-billed Grebe (<i>Podilymbus podiceps</i>)	X ¹
Eared Grebe (<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>)	X ¹
Great Blue Heron (<i>Ardea Herodias</i>)	X ¹
Great Egret (<i>Ardea alba</i>)	X ¹
Cattle Egret (<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>)	X ¹
Green Heron (<i>Butorides virescens</i>)	X ¹
Turkey Vulture (<i>Cathartes aura</i>)	X ¹
Red-tailed Hawk (<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>)	X ¹
Red-shouldered Hawk (<i>Buteo lineatus</i>)	X ¹
American Kestrel (<i>Falco sparverius</i>)	X ¹
Virginia Rail (<i>Rallus limicola</i>)	X ¹
Sora (<i>Porzana carolina</i>)	X ¹
Common Moorhen (<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>)	X ¹
American Coot (<i>Fulica americana</i>)	X ¹
Killdeer (<i>Charadrius vociferous</i>)	X ¹
Rock Pigeon (<i>Columba livia</i>)	X
Band-tailed Pigeon (<i>Patagioenas fasciata</i>)	X ¹
White-winged Dove (<i>Zenaida asiatica</i>)	X ¹
Mourning Dove (<i>Zenaida macroura</i>)	X ¹
Greater Roadrunner (<i>Geococcyx californianus</i>)	X ¹

Table 3. Wildlife Species Observed during 2010 Surveys

Species	Observations
Barn Owl (<i>Tyto alba</i>)	X ¹
Lesser Nighthawk (<i>Chordeiles acutipennis</i>)	X ¹
White-throated Swift (<i>Aeronautes saxatalis</i>)	X ¹
Anna's Hummingbird (<i>Calypte anna</i>)	X ¹
Belted Kingfisher (<i>Ceryle alcyon</i>)	X
Downy Woodpecker (<i>Picoides pubescens</i>)	X ¹
Ladder-backed Woodpecker (<i>Picoides scalaris</i>)	X ¹
Northern Flicker (<i>Colaptes auratus</i>)	X ¹
Western Wood-pewee (<i>Contopus sordidulus</i>)	X ¹
Black Phoebe (<i>Sayornis nigricans</i>)	X ¹
Ash-throated Flycatcher (<i>Myiarchus cinerascens</i>)	X ¹
Cassin's Kingbird (<i>Tyrannus vociferans</i>)	X ¹
Western Kingbird (<i>Tyrannus verticalis</i>)	X ¹
American Crow (<i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>)	X ¹
Common Raven (<i>Corvus corax</i>)	X ¹
Northern Rough-winged Swallow (<i>Stelgidopteryx serripennis</i>)	X ¹
Cliff Swallow (<i>Petrochelidon pyrrhonota</i>)	X ¹
Barn Swallow (<i>Hirundo rustica</i>)	X ¹
Verdin (<i>Auriparus flaviceps</i>)	X ¹
Bushtit (<i>Psaltiriparus minimus</i>)	X ¹
Bewick's Wren (<i>Thryomanes bewickii</i>)	X ¹
House Wren (<i>Troglodytes aedon</i>)	X ¹
Marsh Wren (<i>Cistothorus palustris</i>)	X ¹
Black-tailed Gnatcatcher (<i>Poliophtila melanura</i>)	X ¹
American Robin (<i>Turdus migratorius</i>)	X ¹
Northern Mockingbird (<i>Mimus polyglottos</i>)	X ¹
European Starling (<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>)	X
Phainopepla (<i>Phainopepla nitens</i>)	X ¹
Common Yellowthroat (<i>Geothlypis trichas</i>)	X ¹
Wilson's Warbler (<i>Wilsonia pusilla</i>)	X ¹
Spotted Towhee (<i>Pipilo maculatus</i>)	X ¹
California Towhee (<i>Pipilo crissalis</i>)	X ¹
Abert's Towhee (<i>Melospiza aberti</i>)	X ¹
Black-throated Sparrow (<i>Amphispiza bilineata</i>)	X ¹
Savannah Sparrow (<i>Passerculus sandwichensis</i>)	X ¹
Song Sparrow (<i>Melospiza melodia</i>)	X ¹
Black-headed Grosbeak (<i>Pheucticus melanocephalus</i>)	X ¹
Blue Grosbeak (<i>Passerina caerulea</i>)	X ¹
Red-winged Blackbird (<i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i>)	X ¹
Western Meadowlark (<i>Sturnella neglecta</i>)	X ¹
Brewer's Blackbird (<i>Euphagus cyanocephalus</i>)	X ¹
Great-tailed Grackle (<i>Quiscalus mexicanus</i>)	X ¹
Brown-headed Cowbird (<i>Molothrus ater</i>)	X ¹

Table 3. Wildlife Species Observed during 2010 Surveys

Species	Observations
Bullock's Oriole (<i>Icterus bullockii</i>)	X ¹
House Finch (<i>Carpodacus mexicanus</i>)	X ¹
Lesser Goldfinch (<i>Spinus psaltria</i>)	X ¹
House Sparrow (<i>Passer domesticus</i>)	X
Mammals	
Unidentified Bat (<i>Chiroptera</i> sp.)	X
Coyote (<i>Canis latrans</i>)	V
Raccoon (<i>Procyon lotor</i>)	X
California Ground Squirrel (<i>Spermophilus beecheyi</i>)	X
Unidentified Kangaroo Rat (<i>Dipodomys</i> sp.)	S
Desert Cottontail (<i>Sylvilagus audubonii</i>)	X
American Beaver (<i>Castor canadensis</i>)	S
Desert Mule Deer (<i>Odocoileus hemionus crooki</i>)	S

Source: ICF International 2011a

¹Migratory bird species protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 USC 703-711) (USFWS Migratory Bird Program 2010)

S Observed sign during surveys in the project area (bones, prints, scat)

V Observed during surveys in the vicinity

X Observed during surveys in the project area

Biologists identified some species based on a wildlife sign (prints, scat, and bones) in the project area and known species distributions. Species observed by sign included American beaver (skull), desert mule deer (prints and scat), and an unidentified species of kangaroo rat (tail-drags and prints).

Migratory Birds

Biologists observed numerous species of migratory birds during the 2010 surveys (refer to Table 3). Migratory birds, including raptors, songbirds, waterfowl and shorebirds, likely use the habitat on the lands proposed for exchange for foraging, nesting, and shelter habitat.

Federal Land

Biologists observed only common migratory bird species on the BLM-administered parcel during the 2010 surveys. These species included mourning dove, American crow, American robin, northern mockingbird, and Brewer's blackbird. In addition, biologists observed several non-migratory bird species, including rock pigeon, European starling, and house sparrow on this parcel.

Non-Federal Land

Except for the common bird species, which were also observed on the federal parcel, the birds listed in Table 3 were exclusively observed on the non-federal parcels.

Bald and Golden Eagles

Bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) and golden eagles (*Aquila chrysaetos*) have been documented in the YFO planning area and, although uncommon, can occur in the area year round (BLM 2008a). Bald and golden eagles could forage along the Colorado River corridor as well as the habitat near the oxbow lake on

the non-federal parcels. No bald or golden eagles were observed on either the federal or non-federal parcels during the 2010 surveys.

3.7 Special Status Species

Special status wildlife and plant species with the potential to occur in the vicinity of the lands proposed for exchange include those that are listed or proposed for listing under the Endangered Species Act, BLM sensitive species, and state sensitive species. Special status species with the potential to occur within the lands proposed for exchange were determined based on the following sources of information:

- The USFWS list of threatened, endangered, candidate, or proposed species in Imperial County (USFWS 2010)
- The CNDDDB for the Palo Verde, California and surrounding eight U.S. Geological Survey quadrangles (CNDDDB 2010)
- California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California (2001) and online updates
- The BLM Arizona Sensitive Species List (BLM 2005)
- Results of field surveys conducted in 2010.

Biologists conducted an initial habitat assessment in May 2010 to assess the location, quality, and suitability of the wildlife habitats that would support special status species, including threatened and endangered species, within the lands proposed for exchange.

Six federally-listed threatened, endangered, or candidate species known to occur in the region, include the following:

- Desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*), is federally-listed as threatened
- Razorback sucker (*Xyrauchen texanus*), is federally-listed as endangered
- Yuma clapper rail (*Rallus longirostris yumanensis*), is federally-listed as endangered
- Least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), is federally-listed as endangered
- Southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*), is federally-listed as endangered
- Yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*), is a federal candidate species.

No suitable habitat for desert tortoise occurs on the lands proposed for exchange.

The USFWS designated critical habitat for razorback sucker for the portion of the Colorado River that runs adjacent to the lands proposed for exchange. The 2009 *Biological Opinion for the Yuma Field Office Resource Management Plan* (available as an appendix to the 2010 YFO ROD and Approved RMP) notes that there are three primary constituent elements of razorback sucker critical habitat: water, physical habitat, and biological environment. Water quantity and quality support the life stages of the razorback sucker including the temperature, dissolved oxygen, lack of contaminants, nutrients and turbidity. The physical habitat includes bottom lands, side channels, secondary channels, oxbows, backwaters, and other inhabited or potentially habitable areas of the 100-year floodplain of the Lower Colorado River. Elements of the biological environment include food supply, predation, and competition. No new surveys for this species were conducted to determine its presence.

Potential habitat for the Yuma clapper rail, least Bell's vireo, southwestern willow flycatcher, and yellow-billed cuckoo is marginally present on the federal and non-federal parcels. Biologists conducted surveys for

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these species during May, June, and July 2010 in accordance with established methodologies for each species. In addition, biologists consulted the CNDDDB for records of local occurrences of each species.

A biological evaluation (BE) documented the findings of these surveys and record searches related to all the federally-listed threatened, endangered, or candidate species (ICF International 2011b). The BE also documented the potential for any impacts to these species from the Proposed Action. The BLM will submit the BE to the USFWS for concurrence as part of informal interagency consultation under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.

The non-federal parcels also contain habitat for BLM sensitive species and State of California special status species, though species specific surveys for species on these lists that are not also federally-listed were not conducted. However, as part of all the biological field surveys conducted in support of this EA, surveyors also noted any observations of these species. These observations appear in Table 4 below.

Federal Land

The BLM-administered parcel contains minimal potential habitat for wildlife because of the residential development and lack of natural vegetation. There is no suitable habitat for five of the federally-listed species on the BLM-administered parcel. The federal parcel is not located within designated critical habitat for the razorback sucker. However, critical habitat for razorback sucker occurs in the portion of the Colorado River that runs along this parcel. Razorback suckers could occupy this portion of the Colorado River. No special status species were observed during the surveys of this parcel.

Non-Federal Land

Table 4 lists the special status species observed during the 2010 surveys. Biologists observed 14 special-status species on the non-federal parcels and in the vicinity, including one state and federally listed species, two BLM sensitive species, and multiple state sensitive species.

Table 4. Special Status Species Observed during 2010 Surveys

Species	Species Management Status ¹	Observations ²
Double-crested Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax auritus</i>)	WL	X ³
Least Bittern (<i>Ixobrychus exilis</i>)	SSC	X ³
Black-crowned Night-Heron (<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>)	BLM-S	X ³
Cooper's Hawk (<i>Accipiter cooperii</i>)	WL	X ³
Yuma Clapper Rail (<i>Rallus longirostris yumanensis</i>)	FE, ST, FP	X ³
California Gull (<i>Larus californicus</i>)	WL	X ³
Burrowing Owl (<i>Athene cunicularia</i>)	SSC, BLM-S	V ³
Vaux's Swift (<i>Chaetura vauxi</i>)	SSC	X ³
Vermilion Flycatcher (<i>Pyrocephalus rubinus</i>)	SSC	V ³
Loggerhead Shrike (<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>)	SSC	X ³
Yellow Warbler (<i>Dendroica petechia</i>)	SSC	X ³
Yellow-breasted Chat (<i>Icteria virens</i>)	SSC	X ³

Table 4. Special Status Species Observed during 2010 Surveys

Species	Species Management Status ¹	Observations ²
Yellow-headed Blackbird (<i>Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus</i>)	SSC	X ³
American Badger (<i>Taxidea taxus</i>)	SSC	S

Source: ICF International 2011a; ICF International 2011b

¹Species Management Status

State

FP California Fully Protected
 SSC California Species of Special Concern
 ST California Threatened
 WL California Watch List Species

Federal

BLM-S Bureau of Land Management – Sensitive
 FE Federally Endangered

²Observations

S Observed sign during surveys in project area (prints and diggings)
 V Observed in the vicinity
 X Observed during surveys in the project area

³Migratory bird species protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 USC 703-711) (USFWS Migratory Bird Program 2010)

Identification of the American badger occurred based on sign (diggings and prints) and known species distribution.

Due to the lack of suitable habitat for desert tortoise on the non-federal parcels, no targeted surveys were conducted for this species. Biologists did not observe any physical signs of this species during the May through July or October surveys of the non-federal parcels. The non-federal parcels occur entirely within the 100-year floodplain which is designated as critical habitat for razorback suckers. Razorback suckers have been documented west of the non-federal parcels in the Palo Verde Canal and in a small pond off the river between the lands proposed for exchange. This species could occupy the Colorado River east of the non-federal parcels as well as the oxbow lake (ICF 2011b).

Biologists observed two or three Yuma clapper rails (two sightings may have been the same bird moving though the site) during the surveys. Two sightings occurred within the non-federal parcels and one sighting occurred south of the non-federal parcels. While suitable habitat for the southwestern willow flycatcher, yellow-billed cuckoo, and least Bell's vireo was found on the non-federal parcels, these species were not observed during the surveys.

3.8 Vegetation and Invasive Species

Invasive Plant Species

Biologists conducted a field survey for invasive plant species on August 11, 2010 and prepared a report to document the findings of the survey (ICF International 2010b); that report, augmented by findings in the Biological Summary Report (ICF International 2011a), serve as the basis for this section. Prior to conducting the field survey, ICF reviewed the California Invasive Plant Council database to determine which invasive plant species had the potential to occur in the area. ICF surveyed the federal and non-federal parcels by foot; however, there were areas that were not accessible because of a dense canopy of arrowweed that made walking infeasible. These areas were primarily located near the oxbow lake area within the non-federal parcels. ICF observed eight species of potentially invasive plants during the surveys; however, only two species (salt cedar and barbwire Russian-thistle) are listed as California State-listed Noxious Weeds.

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Vegetation communities observed during the survey included desert saltbush scrub, arrowweed scrub, tamarisk scrub, and cottonwood-willow riparian forest.

Federal Land

A residential development covers the federal land. Vegetation in this area primarily consists of landscaping associated with the residential development, such as lawn, ornamental trees, and shrubs. Two invasive plant species, shepherd's purse (*Capsella bursa-pastoris*) and salt cedar occur on the BLM-administered parcel.

Non-Federal Land

The non-federal land primarily consists of natural open space along the oxbow lake, with the two most northern parcels abutting agricultural land. The area adjacent to oxbow lake had little or no invasive plant cover. Dominant plants within these areas included screw bean mesquite, arrowweed, Emory's baccharis, cattails, Gooding's black willow (*Salix goodingii*), many-fruit saltbush, iodine bush, and creosote bush.

With the exception of salt cedar, the majority of the invasive plant species were located in areas that had been previously disturbed. The presence of salt cedar in these parcels, and along the Colorado River in the federal parcel, is typical of current vegetation communities along the lower Colorado River (BIO-WEST, Inc. and GEO/Graphics, Inc. 2006).

Table 5 lists the invasive plant species observed during the survey and provides the parcel numbers where the species were located.

Table 5. Invasive Plant Species and Location on Non-Federal Lands

Species	Location
Salt Cedar (<i>Tamarix ramosissima</i>) ¹	APN 006-210-23-01, APN 006-210-24-01, APN 006-210-11-01, APN 006-020-52-01
Barbwire Russian-thistle (<i>Salsola paulsenii</i>) ¹	APN 006-210-23-01, APN 006-020-52-01
Black Mustard (<i>Brassica nigra</i>)	APN 006-210-23-01, APN 006-020-52-01
Fine-leaf Tansy-mustard (<i>Descurainia sophia</i>)	APN 006-210-23-01, APN 006-020-52-01
Mediterranean Schismus (<i>Schismus barbatus</i>)	APN 006-020-52-01
Bermuda Grass (<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>)	APN 006-020-52-01
Shepherd's Purse (<i>Capsella bursa-pastoris</i>)	APN 006-210-23-01
Dallis Grass (<i>Paspalum dilatatum</i>)	APN 006-210-24-01

Source: ICF International 2010b; ICF International 2011a

¹Section 5004 of the California Food and Agricultural Code listed noxious weeds

3.9 Riparian-Wetlands Areas, Floodplains, and Floodways

Riparian-Wetlands Areas

Federal Land

Though the federal parcel abuts the Colorado River, the site does not contain riparian-wetland habitat. The banks of the river are channelized and stabilized with rip-rap in some areas. The river bank area is mostly

developed with boat docks and piers, with some areas of salt cedar along the river's edge. Lawn, landscape trees, and associated residences mostly cover the top of the bank.

Non-Federal Land

Riparian-wetland areas along the oxbow lake support cattails, arrow weed, and other riparian species. The old oxbow channel of the Colorado River passes through APN 006-210-23 and APN 006-210-24. The old channel receives river water from the main channel via a culvert. The channel consists of open water with areas of emergent vegetation along the margins and riparian scrub on the banks. This emergent vegetation is dominated by cattails and bank vegetation is dominated by salt cedar, Emory's baccharis, and shrubby willows with a few cottonwood trees.

Floodplains and Floodways

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)-generated Flood Insurance Rate Maps for Imperial County, California (FEMA 2008) were reviewed to determine if the lands proposed for exchange were located within designated floodplains or floodways.

Federal Land

The southernmost portion of the federal parcel located on the north bank of the Colorado River abuts, but is not within, the 100-year flood zone (FEMA 2008).

Non-Federal Land

The entire 225.85 acres of non-federal lands are located within the 100-year flood zone of the Colorado River (FEMA 2008).

3.10 Cultural Resources

A Class III cultural resources study documented cultural resources and determined whether the proposed exchange would have an effect on any historic properties, as defined by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended, within the federal and non-federal parcels proposed for exchange. CRM TECH (2010) performed this study from May through October 2010. Efforts to identify cultural resources included historical and archaeological resources records searches, historical and geoarchaeological research, and a systematic field survey. In addition, the BLM contacted Native American representatives regarding potential cultural resource concerns (see Native American Religious Concerns).

The Class III cultural resources study focused on the project area, consisting of the 27.82 acres parcel of federal land and the five parcels of non-federal land totaling 225.82 acres. Two archaeologists surveyed the entire project area conducting 15-meter-wide transect intervals to cover open areas, former agricultural fields, and vacant residential lots. The archaeologists spot-checked areas covered by dense vegetation where the ground surface could be seen and inspected areas around buildings in the project area. The results of the field survey for the federal and non-federal parcels are discussed below.

The records search found no cultural resource sites (either pre-historic or historic) previously recorded within the project area boundaries. Two sites were identified within the scope of the records searches. However, in both cases, the previously recorded sites were well beyond the immediate vicinity of the project area and are therefore not considered relevant to the proposed exchange. Geoarchaeological research conducted for the study concluded that the project area did not appear to be a likely location for

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long-term Native American habitation during the prehistoric period, or a likely location where substantial and potentially significant prehistoric cultural remains may have survived intact in subsurface deposits.

Federal Land

The BLM evaluated the community of Harvey's Fishing Hole founded between 1956 and 1958, as a potential historic district consisting of 26 historic-period buildings. The buildings are all single-family residences or converted residences. The exact date of construction of the 26 buildings is not known; however, each building demonstrates design characteristics compatible with a late historic-period origin.

The potential historic district and the 26 contributing buildings were evaluated for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) but were recommended not eligible, either collectively (as a historic district) or individually (as individual buildings). This recommendation was based on the lack of unique historical qualities or particularly close association with a pattern of historic events (i.e., the development of riverfront recreational and residential properties following World War II), as well as a loss of historical integrity due to modern modifications of many of the structures.

Non-Federal Land

One previously unknown historic-period archaeological site identified within the project area during the field survey consisted of scattered historic-period household refuse that had been heavily disturbed by past agricultural activities. The site was evaluated for nomination to the NRHP, but was recommended not eligible due to past disturbance, a lack of evidence to suggest that it was closely related to any historic figures or events of recognized significance in national, state, or local history, or that it has the potential to provide any important information for the study of local or regional history.

3.11 Visual Resources

Federal Land

The federal parcel is generally flat, with residences and associated structures and landscaping. The primary colors in the area are browns (soil and vegetation), and grays and greens (vegetation). Because the surrounding landscape is either agricultural or undeveloped riparian or desert scrub habitat, the residential development on the federal parcel attracts viewers' attention from nearby roads.

The BLM manages the parcel as Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class III.

Non-Federal Land

The non-federal parcels are generally flat, natural landscapes. The primary structural elements in the landscape come from vegetation, which ranges from low growing herbaceous vegetation and bare ground to tall cottonwood and salt cedar trees. On several of the parcels, the oxbow lake and drainage canals create interesting visual features. The primary colors in the area are browns (soil and vegetation), and grays and greens (vegetation).

Because the area is not administered by the BLM, VRM classes do not apply.

3.12 Lands and Realty

The YFO ROD and Approved RMP lists as one of its desired future conditions the acquisition of lands that “facilitate access to public lands and resources, maintain or enhance public uses and values, facilitate implementation of this RMP, provide for a more manageable land ownership pattern, include significant natural or cultural resource values” (BLM 2010a). To facilitate this future condition, the BLM “[seeks] to acquire non-federal lands and interests in lands from willing landowners through purchase, exchange, donation, easement, or other means,” in particular lands with high potential value for non-game migratory birds and suitable southwestern willow flycatcher habitat (BLM 2010a).

Federal Land

The legal description of the 27.82 acre federal parcel (Harvey’s Fishing Hole) involved in the land exchange is *Lot 12, Section 9, T. 9 S., R. 22 E.*

The federal parcel has several encumbrances in the form of existing ROWs for canals and transmission lines. Each of the following holders of valid existing rights has been notified in writing of the proposed land exchange with a copy of the NOEP. The following reservations and existing rights encumber the federal parcel:

- A ROW for ditches or canals constructed by the authority of the United States Act of August 30, 1890 (26 Stat. 391; 43 United States Code [U.S.C.] 945)
- A ROW to the Bureau of Reclamation for a canal, levee, and road, effective July 2, 1986, by CAAZCA 17371, under Title V of the Act of October 21, 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1761)
- Those rights for an underground/aerial telephone cable granted to GTE Real Estate Services its successors or assigns, by ROW serial no. CAAZCA 15666, pursuant to Title V of the Act of October 21, 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1761)
- Those rights for a 12 kilovolt electrical distribution line granted to Southern California Edison its successors or assigns, by ROW serial no. CAAZCA 16966, pursuant to Title V of the Act of October 21, 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1761)
- Those rights for a canal granted to Palo Verde Irrigation District its successors or assigns, by ROW serial no. CAAZCA 45579, pursuant to Title V of the Act of October 21, 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1761)
- No mineral leases or mining claims exist on the federal parcel.

The BLM currently holds the water rights associated with this parcel.

Non-Federal Land

Table 6 identifies the legal description and acreage of the non-federal parcels involved in the land exchange.

Table 6. Description of Non-Federal Parcels

Parcel Number	Legal Description	Acreage
APN 006-020-52-01 ¹	Sec 12: NW¼, SW¼, T. 9 S., R. 22 E.	40.00
APN 006-020-51-01	Sec 12: S½, SW¼, T. 9 S., R. 22 E.	12.50
APN 006-210-23-01 ²	Sec 11: E½, SE¼ & NW¼; SE¼, T. 9 S., R. 22 E.	96.85
APN 006-210-24-01 and APN 006-210-11-01 ^{2,3}	Sec 11: SW¼, SE¼ & SE¼; SW¼, T. 9 S., R. 22 E.	32.80 and 43.70

APN	Assessor's parcel number	SE	Southeast
E.	East	Sec	Section
NW	Northwest	SW	Southwest
R.	Range	T.	Township
S.	South		

¹Excepting there from all minerals, coal, carbons, hydrocarbons, oil, gas, chemical elements and compounds whether in solid, liquid or gaseous form, and all steam and other forms of thermal energy on, in or under the above described land provided that the Grantor does not reserve the right to use the subject property or extract minerals or other substances from the subject property above a depth of 500 feet, nor does the Grantor reserve the right to use the surface of the subject property in connection with the rights reserved herein as reserved by the corporation of the presiding Bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

²Excepting any portion of the land within the natural bed of the Colorado River below the line of ordinary high water mark where it was located prior to any artificial or avulsive changes in the location on the riverbed.

³Except the portion conveyed to the State of California by deed recorded February 5, 1963 in Book 1135, Page 431 of Official Records.

The BLM completed a feasibility analysis to document the assessment of the land exchange processing effort and prepared a land exchange ATI to document the commitment of the BLM and SPI to evaluate the merits of the proposed exchange and preliminary title information. The BLM has not identified encumbrances that would prevent the proposed exchange. Canal C-28 runs through the western portion of APN 006-210-24 and APN 006-210-23 (Arizona DEQ 2010). In addition, Table 7 shows the other reservations and existing rights encumber the non-federal parcels. SPI holds the water rights associated with all non-federal parcels.

Table 7. Reservations and Existing Rights on the Non-Federal Parcels

Reservation or Existing Right	Parcel Affected				
	APN 006-020-52	APN 006-020-51	APN 006-210-23	APN 006-210-24	APN 006-210-11
A right-of-way for ditches and canals as reserved by the United States of America in the patent recorded April 12, 1910 as in Book 2, Page 57 of Patents			✓	✓	✓
A right-of-way for ditches and canals as reserved by the United States of America in the patent recorded April 3, 1918 as in Book 8, Page 393 of Patents.			✓	✓	✓
An easement for all public roads and incidental purposes, recorded October 23, 1956 as Instrument Number 5 in Book 954, Page 504 of Official Records.	✓	✓			
An easement for the purpose of conveying irrigation water and incidental purposes, recorded October 23, 1956 as Instrument Number 5 in Book 954, Page 504 of Official Records.	✓	✓			
An easement for electric lines and telephone lines and incidental purposes, recorded June 23, 1961 as File Number 58 in Book 1081, Page 494 of Official Records.			✓	✓	✓
The terms and provisions contained in the document entitled "A Notice of Unrecorded Interest Agreement" recorded March 31, 1993 as Instrument Number 93007379 in Book 1728, Page 313 of Official Records.	✓	✓			

Table 7. Reservations and Existing Rights on the Non-Federal Parcels

Reservation or Existing Right	Parcel Affected				
	APN 006- 020- 52	APN 006- 020- 51	APN 006- 210- 23	APN 006- 210- 24	APN 006- 210- 11
An easement for delivery of irrigation water and incidental purposes, recorded August 16, 1996 as File Number 96019555 in Book 1858, Page 1583 of Official Records. In favor of Lee J. Brey, a married man as his separate property as to an undivided one-half interest and Scott H. Helmer, a married man as his separate property as to an undivided one-half interest. The route of said easement is set out in said document and affects a portion of the herein described property.			✓	✓	✓
An easement for ingress and egress and incidental purposes, recorded August 16, 1996 as File Number 96019556 in Book 1858, Page 1585 of Official Records. In favor of Lee J. Brey, a married man as his separate property as to an undivided one-half interest and Scott H. Helmer, a married man as his separate property, as to an undivided one-half interest. The route of said easement is set out in said document and affects a portion of the herein described property.			✓	✓	✓
The terms and provision contained in the document entitled "Imperial County Land Conservation (Williamson Act) Contract" recorded January 16, 2001 as Instrument Number 01-00765 in Book 2042, Page 579 of Official Records.				✓	✓
A public easement for navigation and the incidents of navigation such as boating, fishing, swimming, hunting, and other recreational uses in and under the Colorado River and including a public right of access to the water.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Easement and rights-of-way for public or private roads or highways along the boundaries of said land as the same now exist and are in use.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Any adverse claim based upon the assertion that some portion of said land is tide and submerged lands, or has been created by artificial means or has accreted to such portion so created.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Any facts an accurate survey would disclose as to the location of the exterior boundaries of said land or as to the location of canals, laterals, waste and drain ditches thereon in use by the Imperial Irrigation District as part of its irrigation system.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Water rights, claims or title to water, whether or not shown by the public records	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Source: BLM 2008c

APN Assessor's parcel number

3.13 Recreation

Recreational opportunities available in the vicinity are primarily associated with the Colorado River, including camping, hiking, rafting, canoeing, swimming, fishing, and wildlife viewing. In the vicinity, the YFO manages the Oxbow Campground that includes several campsites and a boat ramp, as well as concession leases with boat ramps and fuel sales at Hidden Shores and Walter's Camp, and BLM-administered boat ramps further along the river at Senator Wash and Squaw Lake. The closest boat ramps with public access to the Colorado River include the Oxbow Campground, approximately one mile southeast of the non-federal parcels; Walter's Camp, located several miles south of the federal parcel in Palo Verde; and Destiny McIntyre RV Resort, located several miles north of the federal parcel in Blythe (BLM 2010b, California Department of Boating and Waterways 2010).

The BLM YFO estimates that during the fiscal year range of October 1, 2004 to September 30, 2010, the Oxbow Campground received 484,335 visitors, and Walter's Camp received an estimated 64,330 visitors

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(BLM 2011). Visitors to the Ehrenberg Sandbowl Off-Highway Vehicle Open Area, located approximately 12 miles north of the federal parcel, were estimated at 95,549 visitors during the same period. In addition, two other BLM managed areas that provide access to the Colorado River located south of Ehrenberg and approximately 15 miles north of the federal parcel saw an estimated 5,341 and 17,460 visitors during that time (BLM 2011). These visitor use estimates were obtained from the BLM's Recreation Management Information System, which serves as a repository of field-office generated recreation data; this information is generally based on traffic counts, surveys of visitors, and trail registers.

Federal Land

There are currently no publicly available recreational facilities or uses of the federal parcel. Camping sites and a boat dock on the Colorado River through Harvey's Fishing Hole are not available for use by the public, but are available to SPI residential lease holders.

The *Ehrenberg-Cibola Recreation Area Management Plan* (BLM 1994) identified the federal parcel as an area with excellent access to the Colorado River that could provide for public recreation opportunities, including boat-launch facilities, day and overnight use areas, and fishing. The *Ehrenberg-Cibola Recreation Area Management Plan* included an intention to develop recreation facilities on the federal parcel, following expiration of the residential leases, through a recreation concession lease; however, as discussed in Section 2.3, the BLM no longer considers a concession lease as a viable option for this parcel, and identified the area as available for disposal in the YFO ROD and Approved RMP. Though not proposed as part of the No Action or Proposed Action alternatives discussed in this document, in the future the BLM could pursue development of this parcel for public recreation in accordance with the 1994 *Ehrenberg-Cibola Recreation Area Management Plan* (BLM 1994) and the YFO ROD and Approved RMP (BLM 2010a). The concession lease proposed in this 1994 *Ehrenberg-Cibola Recreation Area Management Plan* is no longer considered viable, however the BLM is considering including this parcel in a study of potential concession areas for future recreation development. Any future development on the parcel would be subject to appropriate environmental review before surface disturbance or other major federal actions could proceed.

Non-Federal Land

There are no public recreational opportunities available within the non-federal parcels; however, several recreational facilities exist proximate to these parcels. Just south of APN 006-210-24 and APN 006-210-23 is Imperial County's Palo Verde Park. This park provides a boat launch for accessing the oxbow lake, fishing, as well as several campsites (Imperial County 2010). As noted, the BLM administers the Oxbow Campground located southeast of Palo Verde Park and the non-federal parcels. This recreation site includes recreational vehicle and tent camping sites (subject to a recreation fee), a boat launch with access to the Colorado River, and day use areas along the oxbow lake. The Oxbow Campground area is heavily used on summer and holiday weekends and remains popular during the winter months (BLM 2010b). As noted above, visitors to the Oxbow Campground during fiscal years 2004 to 2010 were estimated at 484,335 (BLM 2011). The BLM manages recreation activities at the Oxbow Campground in accordance with the *Ehrenberg-Cibola Recreation Area Management Plan* and the YFO ROD and Approved RMP (BLM 2010a).

3.14 Socioeconomic

Socioeconomic information considered in this document includes property taxes and Payment in Lieu of Taxes receipts. Payments in Lieu of Taxes are U.S. Federal Government payments to counties to offset property taxes, which are not collected on federally owned lands. Though no project area-specific information was available for inclusion in this document, the general economic environment of tourism near the YFO is also discussed. In addition, it should be noted that the majority of information on the economic value of recreation dealt with the portions of the YFO located in Arizona; this data, though providing useful back information, may therefore not be directly applicable to the project area county or adjacent communities in California.

Tourism is considered an important source of income for the local economies in the vicinity of the project area, including tourism associated with BLM-administered recreation sites. A recent study of tourism in the Yuma, Arizona area found that approximately 14% of visitors to the area came for leisure purposes and approximately 10% were on extended stays in second homes or recreational vehicles (RV)s. Approximately 12.8% of visitors stayed overnight in a campground or RV park and 3.4% stayed in a second home. Visitors on extended stays in second homes or in RV parks and campgrounds stayed an average of 59 days to 35 days, respectively. This same study reported that recreation related spending per party per day was an average of \$263 (Arizona Hospitality Research & Resource Center et. al. 2011). The 2008 *Yuma Field Office Preliminary Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement* estimated the dollar value of 1,000 winter visitors at \$2,169,189 for Yuma and La Paz counties during the period of 2004 to 2005. This dollar value was based on estimated winter visitors only (BLM 2008b).

In Imperial County, California in 2009, visitors who stayed in public campgrounds spent a total of \$2,600,000 and those who stayed in vacation homes spent \$16,300,000 (Dean Runyan Associates, Inc. 2011).

Federal Land

The BLM manages 1,268,196 acres of land in Imperial County eligible for Payment in Lieu of Taxes; with the inclusion of land managed by other federal agencies, 1,352,705 acres in the county are eligible (U.S. Department of the Interior 2010). Payment in Lieu of Taxes amounts are calculated by multiplying a set dollar value (\$2.40 per acre in 2010) by the number of acres, discounted by the county receipts from mining and timber harvest on federal lands. In 2009, Imperial County received \$3,093,802 in Payment in Lieu of Taxes, or approximately \$2.29 per acre (U.S. Department of the Interior 2010). Using this dollars per acre figure, the federal parcel resulted in approximately \$64 in Payment in Lieu of Taxes in 2009.

Current use of this parcel is a recreational and residential development based around the Colorado River. The residential leases generate \$54,000 per year in payments to the BLM. These payments are based on an appraisal performed in 1996.

It is likely that SPI residential lease holders contribute to the local economies while spending time at their second or vacation homes on the federal parcel. However, the dollar amount of this contribution is not known. Facilities on this parcel are not open for public recreational use.

Non-Federal Land

The non-federal parcels proposed for exchange are part of the Imperial County tax base and are valued at an aggregated \$723,000.00, in an Appraisal Review Report dated July 16, 2009. Current uses of these parcels are limited, but may include some recreation use associated with the oxbow lake and scenic quality and naturalness.

There are no developed recreation facilities on the non-federal parcels with the potential to attract visitors and associated recreation related income for the local economies.

3.15 Hazardous Materials

A draft Phase I environmental site assessment was performed on the federal and non-federal parcels, in general conformance with the scope and limitations of American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) Practice E 1527-05 (2005), the United States Environmental Protection Agency Standards and Practices for All Appropriate Inquiries as set forth in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 40, Part 312, and BLM Handbook 2101-4 for Pre-acquisition Environmental Site Assessments. Historical research, document review, and field site assessments were conducted between December 15, 2010 and December 30, 2010 by Ninyo & Moore, Geotechnical and Environmental Sciences Consultants. The objective of the draft Phase I environmental site assessment was to identify, to the extent feasible pursuant to the process described in American Society for Testing and Materials Practice E 1527-05, any “recognized environmental conditions” present on the parcels. Recognized environmental conditions are defined by the American Society for Testing and Materials as “the presence or likely presence of any hazardous substances or petroleum products on a property under conditions that indicate an existing release, a past release, or a material threat of a release of any hazardous substances or petroleum products into structures on the property or into the ground, ground water, or surface water of the property (ASTM 2005).” The BLM is in the process of reviewing the draft Phase I environmental site assessment.

Federal Land

The draft Phase I environmental site assessment found no evidence of recognized environmental conditions in connection with the federal parcel (Ninyo & Moore 2011).

The draft Phase I environmental site assessment did identify several site conditions that, while notable, are not anticipated to result in detrimental effects to human health or environmental quality. These included:

- Pole-mounted transformers observed to be rusty and in poor condition located throughout the site. Southern California Edison Electric Company may need to replace these transformers.
- The site of a removed 200-gallon underground storage tank for gasoline. No indications of stained soils were observed, but documentation stating that the underground storage tank was removed in accordance with state regulations could not be located.
- Asbestos-containing building materials association with some residential structures. These structures mostly appeared to be in good condition, with the exception of several deteriorated residential dwellings. Comprehensive asbestos surveys would need to be conducted on asbestos-containing structures prior to any renovation or demolition activities occur (Ninyo & Moore 2011).

Non-Federal Land

The draft Phase I environmental site assessment found no evidence of recognized environmental conditions in connection with the non-federal parcels (Ninyo & Moore 2011). The assessment did not identify, through record searches or site visits, other notable conditions (e.g., asbestos-containing materials or debris dumping) on the non-federal parcels.

3.16 Environmental Justice

According to the BLM Land Use Planning Handbook (BLM Handbook H-1601-1), environmental justice is “the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Fair treatment means that no group of people, including racial, ethnic, or socio-economic group should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of Federal, state, local, and Tribal programs and policies.” Executive Order 12898 outlines agencies’ responsibilities related to environmental justice. If disproportionately high and adverse impacts from a proposed action are anticipated, it is the responsibility of the BLM to work with the affected groups, including Native American Tribes to determine if land disposition and/or acquisition policies affect real estate values and real income of minority and low income communities, and Tribal representatives. The affected environment related to Native American cultural sites appears under Cultural Resources, while Native American concerns related to the proposed exchange appear in the proceeding section.

Table 8 identifies the percentages of environmental justice populations in Imperial County versus the state of California as a whole. As shown in this table, the area surrounding the project area likely contains some environmental justice populations (i.e., low income and Hispanic peoples) in a higher percentage than the state as whole.

Table 8. Population of Imperial County and the State of California by Race and Income

	Imperial County	California
Population, 2009 estimate	166,874	36,961,664
White persons, 2009 ¹	89.9%	76.4%
Black persons, 2009 ¹	4.2%	6.6%
American Indian and Alaska Native persons, 2009 ¹	2.1%	1.2%
Asian persons, 2009 ¹	2.6%	12.7%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, 2009 ¹	0.2%	0.4%
Persons reporting two or more races, 2009	1.1%	2.6%
Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin, 2009 ²	77.3%	37.0%
White persons not Hispanic, 2009	15.8%	41.7%
Persons below poverty level, 2008	21.5%	13.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2010

Note: The percentages in this table are intended to compare the race and income status of the population of Imperial County versus the State of California as a whole; the sum of the percentages in this table are not intended to equal 100%, as some of the categories are not mutually exclusive (e.g., *Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin* or *Persons below poverty level*).

¹ Includes persons reporting only one race.

² Hispanics may be of any race, so also are included in applicable race categories (e.g., white or black).

3.17 Native American Religious Concerns

The BLM contacted Native American tribes with publication of the NOEP. A letter was sent to the tribes on June 18, 2008, providing notification of the proposed land exchange and requesting early input. Two responses were received in August of 2008. A copy of this letter is included in Appendix C.

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In addition, during the period of June through September 2010, Native American representatives in the region were contacted during preparation of the Class III cultural resources study. Information was requested on potential Native American cultural resources in or near the project area (CRM TECH 2010). One tribe responded and identified that the project area lies in an area directly linked to the tribe's creation story and their traditional use area. The tribe requested a copy of the Class III cultural resources study and requested that the area be carefully surveyed for cultural resources. Findings related to cultural resources in the project area are discussed in the Cultural Resources section. Additional coordination and consultation conducted by BLM with Native American tribes is described in Section 5.

SECTION 4 – ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

4.1 Introduction

Section 4, Environmental Consequences, describes the effects of the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative on resources and uses in the project area. When reading this section, please note that:

- 1) Where the effects of Proposed Action and No Action Alternatives differ, each alternative is discussed separately. Where the effects on a given resource are common to all alternatives, the discussion of environmental consequences applies to both.
- 2) Where the effects on a given resource under an alternative vary between the federal and non-federal parcels, the discussion presents them separately. Where the effects on the resource would be the same on the federal and non-federal parcels, the discussion of environmental consequences applies to both.
- 3) To analyze the environmental consequences under the No Action Alternative, the following assumption was used:
 - a. Under the No Action Alternative, removal of some structures and improvements could occur in the short term as current leases expire and residents do not seek extensions; however, the majority of structures and improvements could be removed in 2017 when the leases are no longer eligible for extension. Following the removal of structures and other improvements (e.g., the residences and the boat dock on the Colorado River), the federal parcel would be reclaimed and revegetated.
- 4) Where appropriate, the analysis discusses environmental consequences based on their **short term** effects, the time from 2011 until the majority of structures are removed in 2017, and **long term** effects, the time following initial reclamation and revegetation of the federal parcel in 2017.

4.2 Soil and Geology

Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would not affect soil resources or the geology of the project area. Effects on soil and geologic resources generally occur due to surface disturbing activities and other land uses (e.g., off-highway vehicles) that disturb soil horizons or increase erosion. No new surface-disturbing activities or land use changes are proposed on either the federal or non-federal parcels as part of the Proposed Action.

No Action Alternative

Federal Land

Surface-disturbing activities related to the removal of structures and related improvements, could occur as leases expire and are not extended. These activities could disturb soil horizons and increase erosion in the short term. Following removal of the structures and related improvements, practices to minimize soil erosion and maintain soil quality and productivity would be implemented in accordance with the YFO ROD and Approved RMP. Disturbed areas would be revegetated, reducing the potential for soil erosion. It is anticipated that a long-term benefit to soils on the federal parcel would result from the restoration and revegetation activities to return the area to a natural condition.

The No Action Alternative would not affect the geology of the project area on the federal parcels.

Non-Federal Land

Under the No Action Alternative, non-federal parcels would remain under SPI ownership and management. Future development on these parcels could potentially affect the soils on these parcels, because any such actions would not be subject to the restoration requirements in the YFO ROD and Approved RMP. However, SPI has not indicated an intention to develop these parcels under this alternative.

4.3 Mineral Resources

See the Lands and Realty section below.

4.4 Paleontology

Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would not affect paleontological resources in the project area. Effects on paleontological resources generally occur due to surface-disturbing activities that damage or disturb sub-surface fossils. No new surface-disturbing activities or land use changes are proposed on either the federal or non-federal parcels as part of the Proposed Action. In addition, because potential fossil yield for the project area is low, the Proposed Action would not result in the loss of public access to significant fossil resources.

No Action Alternative

Federal Land

Though surface-disturbing activities would occur on the federal parcel with the removal of structures and related improvements, the low potential fossil yield in the area means that damage to sub-surface fossils would be unlikely. The low potential for fossil yield in the federal parcel also means that mitigation and additional assessments for paleontological resources would likely not need to occur before the removal of structures. In the event sub-surface fossils were encountered during these activities, procedures developed to recover and protect these resources would be implemented in accordance with BLM rules and regulations for paleontological resources.

Non-Federal Land

No new surface-disturbing activities or land use changes are proposed on the non-federal parcels under the No Action Alternative, and impacts on these parcels would be similar to under the Proposed Action. Future development on these lands could damage or disturb sub-surface fossils and protections that would apply to paleontological resources under federal management would not apply. However, because SPI has not indicated an intention to develop these parcels and their potential fossil yield is low, adverse effects would be unlikely under the No Action Alternative.

4.5 Water

Proposed Action

Implementation of the Proposed Action would result in the transfer of lands abutting the Colorado River and a canal would be transferred to SPI, while parcels adjacent to an oxbow lake, connected to the Colorado River via a culvert, and a drainage canal would be transferred to the BLM. If the Proposed Action were selected, applicable state and federal laws and regulations related to water quality and pollution control would still apply to the federal and non-federal parcels, limiting the potential for water quality impacts regardless of unforeseen future changes in land use once the exchange occurred. Additionally, actions on the acquired non-federal parcels would be subject to analysis under NEPA before surface disturbance and other major federal actions could proceed.

The proposed exchange would not result in additional surface disturbance or a change in land use on either the federal or non-federal parcels and no impact on water quality is anticipated. Surface disturbance strips vegetation cover and exposes soil, potentially increasing the erosion of soil into nearby waterbodies. Because the BLM expects that existing land uses would continue under the Proposed Action, no increase in surface disturbance related erosion is anticipated.

The Proposed Action would not affect the 303(d) listing status of Canal C-28. Since no change in land use is anticipated, no new releases of pollutants likely to affect listing of waterways on the Arizona or California 303(d) lists are anticipated.

No Action Alternative

Federal Land

Under the No Action Alternative, the surface-disturbing activities associated with the removal of structures and associated improvements would increase the short-term potential for soil erosion and runoff into the Colorado River. Applicable state and federal laws and regulations related to water quality and pollution control would apply and measures to minimize effects on water quality would be implemented including during the removal of structures. These measures could include returning the area to a natural condition, erosion control measures, and other BMPs and management actions consistent with the YFO ROD and Approved RMP.

In the short term, the removal of the existing structures would increase the potential for the release of pollutants and chemicals associated with residential structures (e.g., septic systems for processing human waste); however, no significant releases of chemicals that would affect the 303(d) listing of adjacent waterways is anticipated. In accordance with the YFO ROD and Approved RMP, adverse impacts to water quality would be prevented or reduced during the removal of structures through the application of mitigation measures. In addition, the removal of septic systems would be completed in accordance with state and local regulations.

Non-Federal Land

No change in land use is anticipated on the non-federal parcels and effects would be similar to that described under the Proposed Action. Future development on these lands could increase erosion into nearby waterways because some management that would apply to surface disturbing activities under federal management would not apply. However, because SPI has not indicated an intention to develop these parcels, adverse effects would be unlikely under the No Action Alternative.

The No Action Alternative would not affect the 303(d) listing status of Canal C-28. Since no change in land use is anticipated, no new releases of pollutants likely to affect listing of waterways on the Arizona or California 303(d) lists are anticipated.

4.6 Wildlife

Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would result in the transfer of land and management of wildlife habitat on the non-federal parcels to the BLM and the transfer of lands in the federal parcel to private ownership. The BLM-administered parcel contains a residential development and provides minimal habitat for wildlife. The proposed exchange of this parcel would have no effect on wildlife species or habitat.

The non-federal parcels would be transferred to and managed by the BLM in accordance with the YFO ROD and Approved RMP (BLM 2010a) and other applicable laws and regulations. As noted previously, these parcels contain important natural resource values habitat for raptors and other migratory birds along the Colorado River corridor. Areas with these natural resource values are listed in the ROD and Approved RMP as targets for land acquisitions. BLM management would include restrictions and other protections designed to maintain or enhance wildlife habitat, resulting in potential beneficial effects to habitat. For example, the BLM would allow the restoration of native riparian vegetation and removal of salt cedar on a case-by-case basis (BLM 2010a). No construction or surface-disturbing actions are proposed as part of the land exchange and there would be no direct effects on wildlife, habitat, or migratory birds, including bald and golden eagles. Future actions or development on these parcels would require an environmental review to assess potential effects on wildlife.

Indirect effects could result from increased public access and recreational use of the non-federal parcels. However, travel would be limited to existing routes, consistent with restrictions on adjacent BLM-administered lands, which would limit public travel and prohibit off-trail travel, minimizing potential disturbance and disruption of habitat and wildlife. These restrictions would limit potential effects on foraging, nesting, and shelter habitat for migratory birds, including bald and golden eagles. A dense canopy of arrowweed occurs adjacent to the potential nesting habitat along the oxbow lake and may limit public access to these areas, reducing the potential for disturbance of nesting birds that use these areas.

No bald or golden eagles were observed on the federal or non-federal parcels and no actions are proposed that could result in the possession, commerce, or take of bald or golden eagles. The term “take” is defined in the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 USC 668-668d) as pursue, shoot, shoot at, poison, wound, kill, capture, trap, collect, molest, or disturb. No effects on these species are anticipated.

No Action Alternative

Federal Land

Under the No Action Alternative, the structures and related improvements could be removed and short-term and long-term effects to wildlife habitat could occur. This alternative would not change the ownership of the federal parcel, and the area would continue to be managed in accordance with the YFO ROD and Approved RMP (BLM 2010a) and other applicable laws and regulations designed to maintain or enhance wildlife habitat. As noted in Section 3.5, there is minimal habitat for wildlife on this parcel, with only common migratory and non-migratory birds observed during wildlife surveys. In the short term as structures are removed, potential effects on wildlife habitat could occur, including disruptions from increased noise, dust and human activity during construction, and the loss of foraging, nesting and shelter

habitat due to removal of lawn, ornamental trees and shrubs. Limited direct effects on wildlife are anticipated because of these activities, though there is a potential for direct mortality of sedentary or less mobile wildlife species. In the long term, removal of the structures and reclamation and return of the area to a natural state could result in more wildlife habitat becoming available. No direct effects on bald or golden eagles would occur and any potential short- or long-term effects that could result would be from those effects described on wildlife habitat.

Non-Federal Land

The non-federal lands would remain under SPI ownership and management. Management restrictions and other protections designed to protect or enhance wildlife habitat would not apply to these lands under private ownership. Should development occur on these parcels, wildlife habitat could be lost potentially affecting wildlife species that use or inhabit these parcels, including migratory birds as well as bald and golden eagles. However, SPI has not indicated an intention to develop these parcels.

4.7 Special Status Species

Proposed Action

The BLM conducted informal consultation with the USFWS by submitting a BE (ICF International 2011b) which documented the results of the biological field surveys. The BE disclosed whether federally-listed or candidate species would be affected by the proposed land exchange and whether designated or proposed critical habitat would be adversely modified and determined if formal consultation with USFWS is necessary.

The effects on BLM sensitive and State of California listed species would be the same as described under the Wildlife section. No adverse impacts are anticipated to these species under the Proposed Action or No Action Alternative; however, additional protections for wildlife habitat under the Proposed Action may result in beneficial effects. The remainder of this section summarizes the results of the BE, which captures the effects of the Proposed Action on federally-listed threatened and endangered species.

Federal Land

Under this alternative, the BLM-administered parcel would be transferred to private ownership. The parcel does not provide potential habitat for any federally-listed species and transferring the property to private ownership would have no effect on federally-listed species or their habitat. There would be no effect on the razorback sucker, because no actions are proposed that would impact razorback suckers or their habitat. The federal parcel is not within designated critical habitat for the razorback sucker (see the No Action Alternative below for additional information).

Non-Federal Land

The non-federal parcels would be transferred to and managed by the BLM. There would be no effect on desert tortoise due to a lack of suitable habitat for this species within the non-federal parcels. In addition, there would be no adverse effect on the razorback sucker, because no actions are proposed that would affect razorback suckers or their habitat. All of the non-federal parcels are within the 100-year floodplain portion of razorback sucker critical habitat, and additional habitat protections on this area under BLM management may result in beneficial effects.

There would be no adverse direct effects on the remaining federally listed species, candidate species or critical habitat on the non-federal parcels, but there could be beneficial effects from management by the BLM. The non-federal parcels would be managed in accordance with management direction provided in the YFO ROD and Approved RMP as well as other applicable laws and regulations. BLM management would include restrictions and other protections designed to maintain or enhance riparian habitat that does not currently apply to these lands. No adverse effects would occur because the Proposed Action does not involve actions that would result in alteration of the physical environment, nor would it implement management that could result in direct adverse effects on the federally-listed, candidate species. No construction or other surface-disturbing actions (e.g., recreation facility development or ROW authorization) would occur as part of the Proposed Action on these parcels. Authorization of any future major BLM actions on these parcels would require a separate environmental review and coordination with the USFWS.

Potential indirect effects on federally-listed and candidate species could occur as a result of allowing public access to the non-federal parcels. Public use of and access to the parcels could increase, subsequently increasing the potential for disturbance to Yuma clapper rails, southwestern willow flycatchers, and least Bell's vireos. However, this indirect effect would be unlikely to occur because of the dense stand of arrowweed that occurs adjacent to the potential nesting habitat along the oxbow lake, which effectively limits public access to these areas. Travel would be limited to existing routes, consistent with restrictions on adjacent BLM-administered lands, which would further limit public travel and prohibit off-trail travel minimizing disturbance of these species.

If southwestern willow flycatchers were found to occur on these parcels, travel would be further restricted by the "use fencing or physical barriers to protect riparian [southwestern willow flycatcher] habitat from unauthorized [off-highway vehicle] use" (BLM 2010a). Management under the YFO ROD and Approved RMP would limit potential human disturbance within the parcels due to restrictions or prohibitions against "human caused disturbances to Yuma clapper rail habitat or individuals in occupied territories during the breeding and molting seasons (March 15–September 1)" (BLM 2010a). Additionally, the non-federal parcels show evidence of past disturbance (e.g., agricultural use) and access to the site, and there is nothing to suggest (e.g., information submitted by the public during scoping) that there is public demand for such access that would lead to an increase in recreational or other use of the non-federal parcels under BLM management.

Potential effects on yellow-billed cuckoo are expected to be similar to those for the Yuma clapper rail, southwestern willow flycatcher, and least Bell's vireo, based on the presence of suitable, though marginal, habitat on the non-federal parcels and the increased protection this habitat would receive under BLM management.

No Action Alternative

Federal Land

Similar to the discussion for wildlife, ownership of the federal parcel would not change and the area would continue to be managed in accordance with the YFO ROD and Approved RMP and other applicable laws and regulations. No suitable habitat for special status species, including federally-listed species, occurs on this parcel and there would be no effect on special status species. If the structures and related improvements are removed from the federal parcel, more wildlife habitat could become available on this parcel, a beneficial effect in the long term.

Management of the designated critical habitat for razorback suckers adjacent to this parcel along the Colorado River would remain unchanged, and the removal of structures and improvements under the No Action Alternative would not affect the primary constituent elements of this habitat.

Non-Federal Land

The non-federal parcels would remain under private ownership. Management restrictions and other protections designed to protect or enhance wildlife habitat, including special status species habitat, do not apply to the non-federal lands. This would include the 100-year floodplain and portions of the oxbow lake within the non-federal parcels where razorback suckers could occur. Any development on these parcels could result in adverse effects to special status species or their habitat, including alteration of the primary constituent elements of designated critical habitat for razorback suckers; however, the SPI has not indicated an intention to develop these parcels under the No Action Alternative.

4.8 Vegetation and Invasive Species

Proposed Action

Federal Land

No effects on vegetation and invasive species would occur under the Proposed Action. Ownership of the federal parcel would be transferred to SPI, who would be responsible for management of vegetation and invasive plant species. Only two potentially invasive species, shepherd's purse and salt cedar, occur on this parcel, which consists of residences and associated landscaping and does not contain native vegetative communities.

Non-Federal Land

The non-federal lands would be transferred to and managed by the BLM, consistent with management direction in the YFO ROD and Approved RMP and other applicable policy and guidance. On a case-by-case basis, considering the likelihood of restoration success and other factors, and subject to appropriate environmental analysis, invasive plant species located within the non-federal parcels could be treated. Such treatment could include the removal of salt cedar and restoration of native riparian vegetation. However, no specific treatment of invasive species or habitat improvement activities are proposed as part of this land exchange.

Generally, ground disturbance that removes vegetation creates access points for invasive species establishment or expansion. No ground-disturbing activities or development is proposed as part of the land exchange and therefore no potential for the spread of invasive plant species from such activities would exist.

No Action Alternative

Federal Land

Under the No Action Alternative, the BLM would maintain responsibility for the management of invasive plant species on the federal parcel, consistent with the YFO ROD and Approved RMP. In the short term while leases are in effect, the BLM does not anticipate performing vegetation or invasive species treatments in this parcel. However, surface-disturbance related to the removal of the structures and related improvements could increase the risk of establishment and spread of invasive plant species.

Disturbed areas would be revegetated and management described in the YFO ROD and Approved RMP would be applied, potentially including application of an integrated weed management approach to prevent and contain invasive weeds species and restore native species. In the long term, assuming successful restoration of the disturbed portions of the parcel occurred, beneficial effects on vegetation and the management of invasive plant species could occur as native plant communities and conditions that are more natural are restored.

Non-Federal Land

On the non-federal parcels, SPI would continue to be responsible for the control of invasive species or other vegetation treatments. SPI has not performed any invasive species treatments in the past, and has not indicated an intention to perform future vegetation treatments on any of these parcels under the No Action Alternative. Should invasive species spread on the parcels, this lack of treatment may result in adverse effects, relative to the BLM management of these areas under the Proposed Action, from increased invasive species spread on these parcels.

4.9 Riparian-Wetland Areas, Floodplains, and Floodways

Proposed Action

Federal Land

The federal parcel is not located within the 100-year floodplain and does not contain any identified wetlands; therefore, no effects to wetlands, floodplains, and floodways are anticipated.

Non-Federal Land

The BLM would acquire the non-federal parcels under the Proposed Action, all of which are located within the 100-year floodplain of the Colorado River. The Proposed Action does not include development or surface-disturbing activities and, therefore, no impacts to the hydrologic function of the Colorado River system and the relationship of the river with the surrounding floodplain (e.g., sediment and runoff control) would occur. Should the BLM undertake construction in the future, appropriate environment analyses would be conducted and structures would be subject to the YFO ROD and Approved RMP, which requires any permanent new facilities in the floodplain be flood proofed.

No Action Alternative

Federal Land

The federal parcel is not located within the 100-year floodplain and does not contain any identified wetlands; therefore, no effects to wetlands, floodplains, and floodways are anticipated from the removal of structures and improvements or site restoration. However, activities associated with the removal of improvements along the river could result in short term disruptions along the riverside where these structures occur. Restoration following the removal of these improvements would be in accordance with the applicable regulations and the YFO ROD and Approved RMP, and could include the use of native, bank stabilizing riparian vegetation and the control of invasive species. Long term beneficial effects could be realized from the restoration of the native plant communities.

Non-Federal Land

Under the No Action Alternative, SPI would maintain ownership of the floodplains and wetlands in the non-federal parcels, and any future construction in these parcels would be required to follow applicable laws and regulations. All the non-federal parcels are located within the 100-year floodplain and any structures built in these parcels by SPI or subsequent owners would likely require flood insurance. Depending on the type and size of future activity, a permit under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act could be required before development could occur. SPI has not indicated an intention to develop these parcels under the No Action Alternative.

4.10 Cultural Resources

Proposed Action

Federal Land

Under the Proposed Action, the land would be transferred to SPI and the change in land ownership would not affect cultural resources. There are no identified cultural resources on the federal parcel eligible for listing on the NRHP. Should future cultural resources be discovered, they would not be subject to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act or BLM rules and regulations designed to protect cultural resources.

Non-Federal Land

Under the Proposed Action, the non-federal land would be transferred to and managed by the BLM. There are no identified NRHP-eligible sites on the non-federal land. Ground-disturbing activities that could potentially affect undetected cultural resources would require compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act as well as BLM regulations and policies. No surface-disturbing activities are anticipated as part of the Proposed Action. The non-federal lands would be open to public access and increased public use of the area could affect undetected cultural resources from trampling, breakage, vandalism, site disturbance, and artifact collection and removal. However, the low potential for cultural resources and the inaccessibility of the majority of the parcels due to thick vegetation would make adverse effects to cultural resources unlikely.

No Action Alternative

Federal Land

Under the No Action Alternative, affects on cultural resources would be unlikely, as the federal parcel would remain under federal management. The 26 buildings on the federal parcel are not eligible for listing under the NRHP and would not be afforded statutory protection by the BLM. Under the No Action Alternative, the buildings could be removed. No other cultural resources were identified on this parcel during the Class III cultural resources study.

Though surface-disturbing activities could occur on the federal parcel with the removal of structures and related improvements, the lack of identified cultural resources and the lack of potential for intact subsurface cultural deposits means that damage to currently undiscovered cultural resources would be unlikely. If undiscovered, buried cultural resources were discovered during the removal of structures or other improvement, they would be subject to BLM procedures, rules and regulations designed to protect cultural resources, including Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act if NRHP eligible.

Non-Federal Land

Under the No Action Alternative, non-federal lands and any associated cultural resources would remain under SPI ownership. The debris scatter identified on one of the non-federal parcels was not NRHP-eligible and no impacts to discovered cultural resources would occur. Should any NRHP eligible sites be identified, they would not be subject to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act or BLM rules and regulations designed to protect cultural resources.

4.11 Visual Resources

Proposed Action

Federal Land

The federal parcel would be removed from BLM management and VRM objectives would no longer apply. No substantial changes to the existing viewshed are anticipated because the residential development land use would not change under the Proposed Action and the visual contrast presented by residences, riverside docks, and other man-made structures would continue to be visible from the Colorado River and adjacent roads.

Non-Federal Land

The non-federal parcels would be under BLM management and would be subject to VRM Class III objectives to “partially retain the existing character of the landscape” by allowing up to a moderate “level of change to the characteristic landscape” (BLM 1986). No effects are anticipated because the existing land use (i.e., wildlife habitat) and the view of this area from the oxbow lake and nearby roads would not change under the Proposed Action. The BLM does not anticipate development on these parcels, but should surface-disturbing activities be authorized in the future, managing these areas as VRM Class III would limit the resulting visual contrast allowed.

No Action Alternative

Federal Land

Under the No Action Alternative, the BLM would retain the federal parcel and the current residential development structures and associated improvements could be removed. If these structural elements were removed, the visual contrast from the surrounding landscape would increase in the short term due to the surface-disturbing activities. However, because these disturbed areas would be restored and revegetated, the visual contrast on the parcel from the surrounding landscape would be reduced over the long term. Any future development by the BLM would be subject to VRM Class III objectives, which would limit activities to those that attract attention but not dominate the view of the casual observer (BLM 1986).

Non-Federal Land

The non-federal parcels would remain under SPI ownership; SPI has not indicated plans for development on these parcels and the effects are anticipated to be the same as under the Proposed Action. If SPI or subsequent owners decided to pursue development of these parcels, BLM VRM objectives would not apply and contrast that would change existing character of the area (as viewed from the oxbow lake or nearby roads) could occur.

4.12 Lands and Realty

Proposed Action

Acquisition of the non-federal parcels proposed for exchange would serve the public interest and conform to the YFO ROD and Approved RMP through acquisition of land with significant natural resource values (including non-game migratory bird and potential southwestern willow flycatcher habitats). Under the Proposed Action, the BLM would transfer ownership of the federal parcel, resulting in increased management efficiency. The BLM would realize time savings if they no longer administer the residential leases. The small size of the parcel and numerous existing residential structures located on the site means that the potential for adverse effects to future ROWs would be minimal; no ROW permits for this parcel are under consideration.

The non-federal parcels proposed for exchange would accomplish the purpose and need for the Proposed Action by acquiring land with high resource values that would facilitate better management of existing public lands and protect the resource values from degradation resulting from commercial or residential development. The resource values in the 225.85 acres of non-federal land are generally higher than in the existing 27.82 acres of the federal parcel.

If the Proposed Action were selected, a patent would be issued subject to the reservations and existing rights identified in Section 3, Lands and Realty. Prior to issuance of a patent, and subject to limitations prescribed by law and regulation, a holder of any existing rights within the federal parcel would be given the opportunity to amend their ROW for conversion to an easement or to a new term, possibly including perpetuity.

The exchange would include both surface and mineral (subsurface) estate, with the exception of mineral estate on APN 006-020-52-01. A mineral report (BLM 2002) prepared for the exchange lands and approved by BLM on May 28, 2002, concluded:

- The non-federal lands have no mineral potential for leasable or locatable minerals, and low potential for salable minerals.
- The mineral values of the selected federal lands and the offered non-federal lands in the Proposed Action appear to be equal or approximately equal.
- The exchange of mineral interests can proceed, with no mineral reservations needed.

No mineral leases or mining claims exist on the federal parcel. The likelihood that a private entity would attempt to develop the mineral estate on APN 006-020-52-01 is low due to the low to no mineral potential on this parcel (BLM 2002).

The Proposed Action would also include the transfer of water rights associated with each parcel. Specifically, both the BLM and SPI would become eligible to obtain water from the Palo Verde Irrigation District.

No Action Alternative

Federal Land

Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no change in the current land tenure, ROWs and other valid existing rights, and water rights associated with the federal parcel. As the residential leases expire and are, potentially, not extended, the BLM would no longer need to administer these leases.

Non-Federal Land

Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no change in the current land tenure, ROWs and other valid existing rights, and water rights associated with the non-federal parcels. The BLM would not fulfill its purpose and need of acquiring land with high resource values through the exchange of the lower resource value federal parcel.

4.13 Recreation

Proposed Action

Federal Land

Under the Proposed Action, the existing campsites, boat dock, and piers on the federal parcel would continue to be unavailable for public use, and there would continue to be no public access to the Colorado River through Harvey's Fishing Hole. Visitors wishing to recreate, camp, or access the Colorado River in the area would need to continue to use nearby privately-owned facilities or publicly administered county, state, or federal facilities. Refer to Section 3.12, Recreation, for a list of other facilities in the project area. Since the BLM would not be able pursue future recreation development on this parcel, the potential beneficial effect described under the No Action Alternative below would not occur. However, since no recreational development is currently proposed under the No Action Alternative, no adverse effects to public recreation would occur under this alternative.

Non-Federal Land

The Proposed Action would not result in substantial new recreational opportunities in the project area. No new developed recreation facilities, such as a boat ramp or camping sites are proposed for the non-federal parcels, though the area would be available for dispersed recreational use.

Recreational use on the parcels would be managed in accordance with the 1994 *Ehrenberg-Cibola Recreation Area Management Plan* and the 2010 YFO ROD and Approved RMP. As discussed in Section 3 of this document, the thick vegetation on the parcels makes substantial new dispersed recreational use of these parcels unlikely.

No Action Alternative

Federal Land

Under the No Action Alternative, the campsites, boat dock and access to the Colorado River would not be available for public use in the short term while leases are in effect. Visitors would continue to use nearby privately-owned facilities or publicly administered county, state, or federal facilities for camping and recreation activities.

No new developed recreation facilities (e.g., boat docks or hardened campsites) are proposed for the federal parcel. However, as the leases expire and are potentially not extended, the structures and associated improvements, including the existing boat dock, could be removed. In the long term, if the leases expire and structures and improvements are removed, public recreational use of the parcel and, potentially, access to the Colorado River through the federal parcel may increase. Any recreation development on the parcel would be subject to appropriate environmental analysis before surface disturbance or other major federal actions could proceed. In the event BLM chose to develop this site for

recreation, public recreation opportunities in the area would increase, which would be a potential beneficial effect. Though the number of potential visitors to such a development is not known, the visitation estimates for the nearby Oxbow Campground, as provided Section 3.12, may provide a useful comparison. While any potential future recreation development would be managed in accordance with the 1994 *Ehrenberg-Cibola Recreation Area Management Plan* (BLM 1994) and the YFO ROD and Approved RMP (BLM 2010a), no such development is proposed as part of the No Action Alternative.

Non-Federal Land

Under the No Action Alternative, the non-federal parcels would not be acquired and the lands would continue to be unavailable for public recreational use.

4.14 Socioeconomic

Proposed Action

Federal Land

Using the 2009 dollar value of \$2.29 per acre, transfer of the federal parcel to SPI would result in the loss of approximately \$64 in Payment in Lieu of Taxes to Imperial County. However, after the land exchange this parcel would enter the Imperial County tax base and would increase county tax revenue. The current assessed value of \$700,000, the county would receive approximately \$8,750 in tax revenue based on an average tax rate of 1.25% (Imperial County 2011).

It is assumed that SPI residents would continue to contribute to the local economies; however, the dollar amount of this contribution is not known.

Non-Federal Land

Under the Proposed Action, BLM acquisition of the non-federal parcels would result in payments of approximately \$517 in Payment in Lieu of Taxes to Imperial County. Taking in to account the loss of Payment in Lieu of Taxes from the federal parcel, the county would receive \$453 in new Payments in Lieu of Taxes.

Alternately, after the exchange the non-federal parcels would leave the county tax base. Based on their assessed value of \$723,000, this would result in the loss of approximately \$9037.50 in property taxes. Considered against the new tax revenue from the federal parcel, the loss of these non-federal parcels would result in the loss of \$287.50 in taxes to Imperial County.

No new developed recreation facilities are proposed for the non-federal parcels with the potential to attract visitors and tourism income for the local economies.

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, Payment in Lieu of Taxes payments and the county tax base would remain the same.

No new developed recreation sites are proposed for the federal parcel under the No Action Alternative. However, should the BLM choose to develop recreation facilities on the federal parcel in the future, beneficial economic effects could occur. While such recreation development could potentially increase the number of visitors to the area, thereby providing additional revenue related to recreational use of the

federal parcel, any such increase would come at the expense of current contributions from SPI leaseholders. See Section 3.18 for a discussion related to the economic value of recreation.

4.15 Hazardous Materials

Proposed Action

Federal Land

The draft Phase I environmental site assessment did not identify any recognized environmental conditions on the federal parcel. The draft Phase I environmental site assessment did identify three notable site conditions, including the pole-mounted transformers, the site where the 200-gallon underground storage tank was previously located, and asbestos-containing building materials associated with the residential structures. The pole-mounted transformers are owned and maintained by Southern California Edison Electric Company. There is no evidence that the 200-gallon underground storage tank was improperly removed and no stained soils were observed. The land would be exchanged as is, including the existing residential structures owned and maintained by SPI residents. These site conditions are not expected to result in any detrimental effects to human health or environmental quality and would not prohibit the proposed land exchange. There are no other hazardous materials known to exist on-site. The BLM would not transfer any hazardous materials to SPI as a result of the Proposed Action.

Non-Federal Land

No recognized environmental conditions or hazardous materials were identified on the non-federal parcels and the BLM would not acquire any hazardous materials from SPI as a result of the Proposed Action.

No Action Alternative

Federal Land

The draft Phase I environmental site assessment did not identify any recognized environmental conditions or hazardous materials on the federal parcel, with the exception of asbestos-containing building materials associated with several of the residential structures. Under the No Action Alternative, the residential structures could be removed after the residential leases expire either by the lessees or by the BLM at the expense of the lessees, as required by the leases. In this event, prior to removal of the structures, a comprehensive asbestos survey could be conducted. Removal of the asbestos-containing building materials would occur in accordance with applicable procedures and requirements for asbestos removal and disposal.

Non-Federal Land

The draft Phase I environmental site assessment did not identify any recognized environmental conditions or hazardous materials on the non-federal parcels.

4.16 Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898 requires that the BLM and other federal agencies identify and address “disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations.”

Neither the Proposed Action nor No Action Alternative would result in adverse impacts to environmental justice populations. No potential adverse human health impacts have been identified and no significant adverse environmental effects would result under either alternative. See Native American Religious Concerns below for a discussion of effects to Native American cultural sites.

4.17 Native American Religious Concerns

Proposed Action

Federal Land

In general terms, the transfer of cultural resources out of BLM management would be an adverse impact, because a private owner would not be subject to the same laws and regulations designed to protect cultural resources, while the transfer of cultural properties to BLM management would be a beneficial impact.

As described in Section 3.16, no historic properties, as defined by Section 106 regulations, and no historic properties are likely to exist within or adjacent to the project area (CRM TECH 2010). Therefore, the Proposed Action would not result in the transfer of cultural properties from the BLM to SPI.

The project area was identified as lying within an area linked to the creation story and traditional use area of a tribe. The proposed exchange would result in the loss of the federal parcel within this area. However, because the parcel contains a permanent residential development, the cultural integrity of the site is likely already compromised; no new adverse impacts to the cultural setting are anticipated as a result of the Proposed Action.

Non-Federal Land

As with the federal parcel, the non-federal parcel does not contain any Section 106 historic properties within or adjacent to the project area, or any surviving Native American cultural deposits (CRM TECH 2010). Therefore, the Proposed Action would not result in the transfer of cultural resources to the BLM from SPI and would not result in beneficial impacts to any cultural sites.

Like the federal parcel, the non-federal parcels offered for exchange lie within an area linked to the creation story of a tribe's people as they contain lands abutting the former channel of the Colorado River. The Proposed Action could result in beneficial effects to the preservation of this area by moving the area to BLM management and preventing future development that could alter the character of these sites.

No Action Alternative

Federal Land

The BLM could remove the residential structures and associated improvements and this area would remain under BLM administration. This may be a beneficial effect since the site would be returned to a more natural condition (i.e., through structure removal and reclamation) and public access to the site would be available.

Non-Federal Land

Under the No Action Alternative, the BLM would not manage the non-federal parcels and any potential beneficial effects from preventing development of these areas would not occur. As previously noted, no development of these parcels has been proposed by SPI under the No Action Alternative.

4.18 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts are the effects of the proposed project in consideration of other “past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions” (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1508.7) within the cumulative impacts analysis area. For this project, the cumulative impacts analysis area is the YFO planning area. To be considered, future land exchanges would be compared against the same criteria as this exchange to determine if they are in the public interest and comply with the YFO ROD and Approved RMP. Therefore future exchanges, while not affected by this exchange, would be expected to lead to further enhanced protection for important resource values in the cumulative impacts analysis area. The proposed action would continue the trend of a net increase in BLM-administered lands in the assessment area (all land acquisitions minus all disposals) (BLM 2008b).

The exchange of the federal parcel would limit future potential to develop camping, boating, or other recreational facilities on the site; should such development be needed in the future other sites would need to be considered. The *Ehrenberg-Cibola Recreation Area Management Plan* (BLM 1994) notes that, “the Harvey's Fishing Hole site is one of the best main channel river access points on BLM-administered land within the [YFO]. It is a prime parcel for land- and water-based recreational development”. Though the concession plan described in the *Ehrenberg-Cibola Recreation Area Management Plan* is no longer considered by the BLM to be a viable option, removing the parcel from BLM management could limit development of these opportunities in the future. Limited camping opportunities exist in areas surrounding the federal parcel (see Section 3.12, Recreation). Boat ramps, though they can receive heavy use during parts of the year, are available in areas around the federal parcel. In addition, a reasonable foreseeable boat ramp facility by the Holt Group, the Cibola Boat Ramp would be located south of Harvey's Fishing Hole on the Arizona side of the Colorado River. The Cibola Boat Ramp is currently undergoing permitting and will provide access to the river. In October of 2010, the Holt Group submitted a request for construction of the boat ramp to the Army Corps of Engineers.

SECTION 5 – CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

This section describes specific BLM actions to consult and coordinate with tribes and other government agencies during preparation of this EA.

5.1 Section 7 Consultation

The BLM is in the process of beginning informal Section 7 consultation with the USFWS and will submit the project BE, describing the effects of the Proposed Action on threatened and endangered species. The BLM will continue coordination with USFWS, as requested, following public review of this document.

5.2 Native American Consultation

Discussion and consultation with Native American Tribes has been ongoing throughout the project. Tribal concerns related to potential cultural resources on the parcels proposed for exchange can be reviewed in Section 3 of this document. Native American tribes were notified of the proposed land exchange in June 2008 and were contacted again during June 2010 through September 2010, in preparation for the Class III cultural resources study. Formal consultation with the tribes was initiated when the BLM submitted a letter dated January 19, 2011 (Appendix C) and a copy of the final project Class III cultural resources study to 14 Native American tribes. The BLM received numerous responses to this letter and consultation efforts with the tribes will continue throughout development of the project. In addition, a site visit was conducted on February 16, 2011, with a representative of the Colorado River Indian Tribes Museum to explain the project and answer any questions. The BLM will notify the Native American tribes when the EA is available for public review and comment.

SECTION 6 – LIST OF PREPARERS

Project Team Member	Title
Vanessa Briceno, BLM	Realty Specialist (Project Manager)
Candy Holzer, BLM	Land Law Examiner
Tom Jones, BLM	Archeologist
Jeff Young, BLM	Wildlife Biologist
Dave Daniels, BLM	Planning/Environmental Coordinator
Ron Morfin, BLM	Recreation and Wilderness Team Lead
Mike Werner, BLM	BLM Arizona State Office
ICF International	Project Consultants

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Sportsman's Paradise Land Exchange
Environmental Assessment

Appendix A

Figures and Site Photos

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LIST OF FIGURES

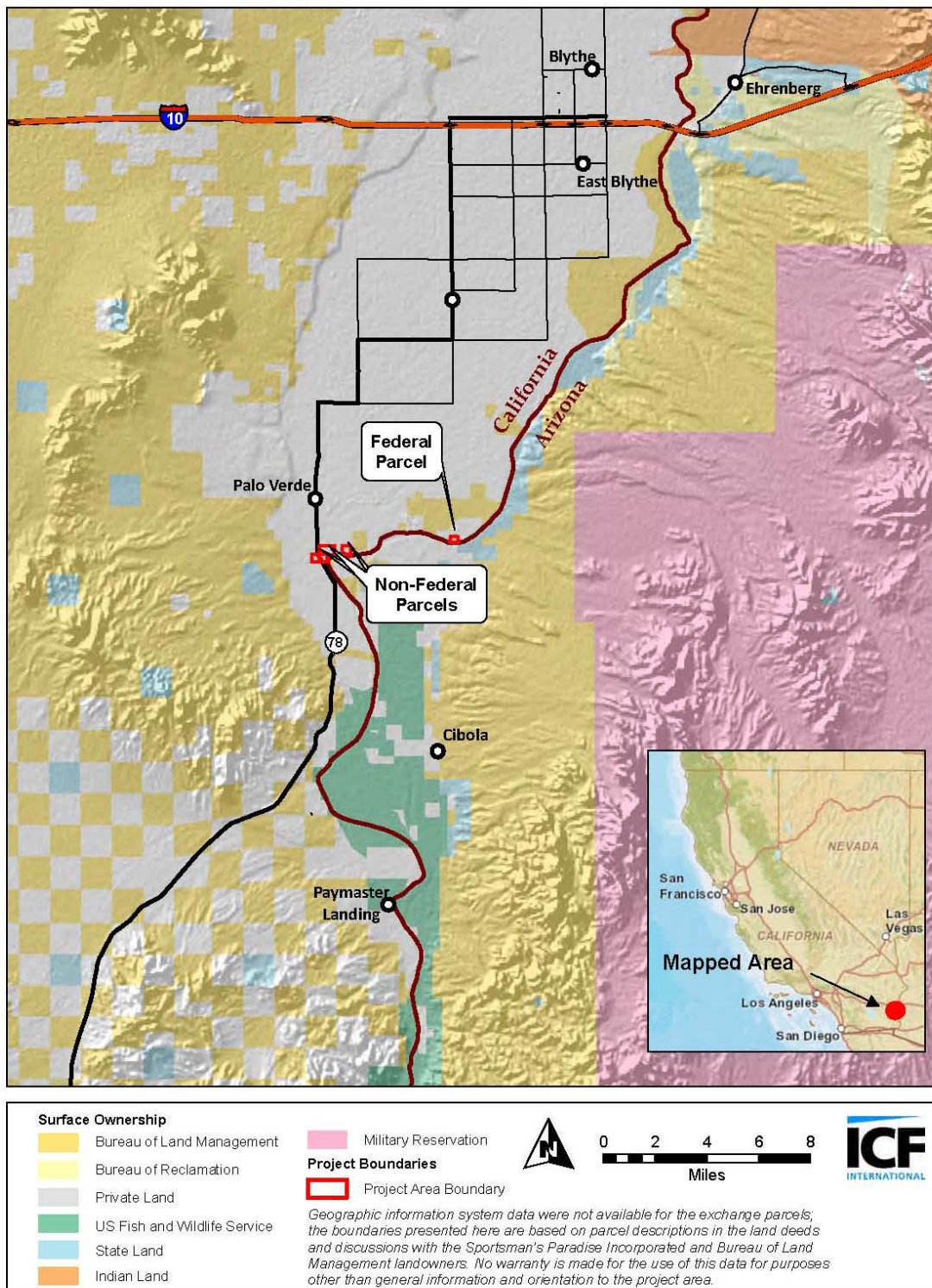
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Figure 1. Location of Proposed Exchange



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Figure 2. Federal Parcel (Harvey's Fishing Hole)

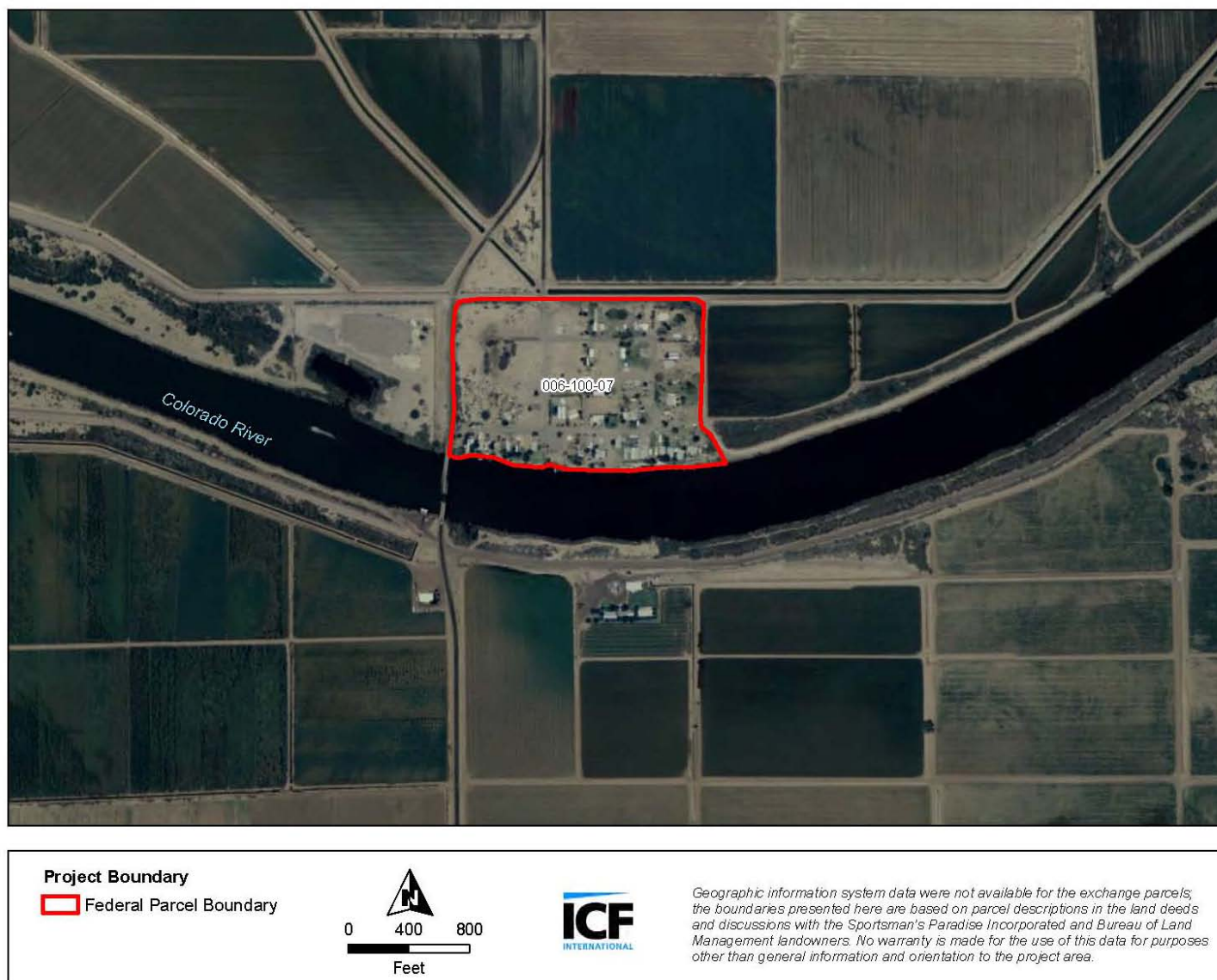
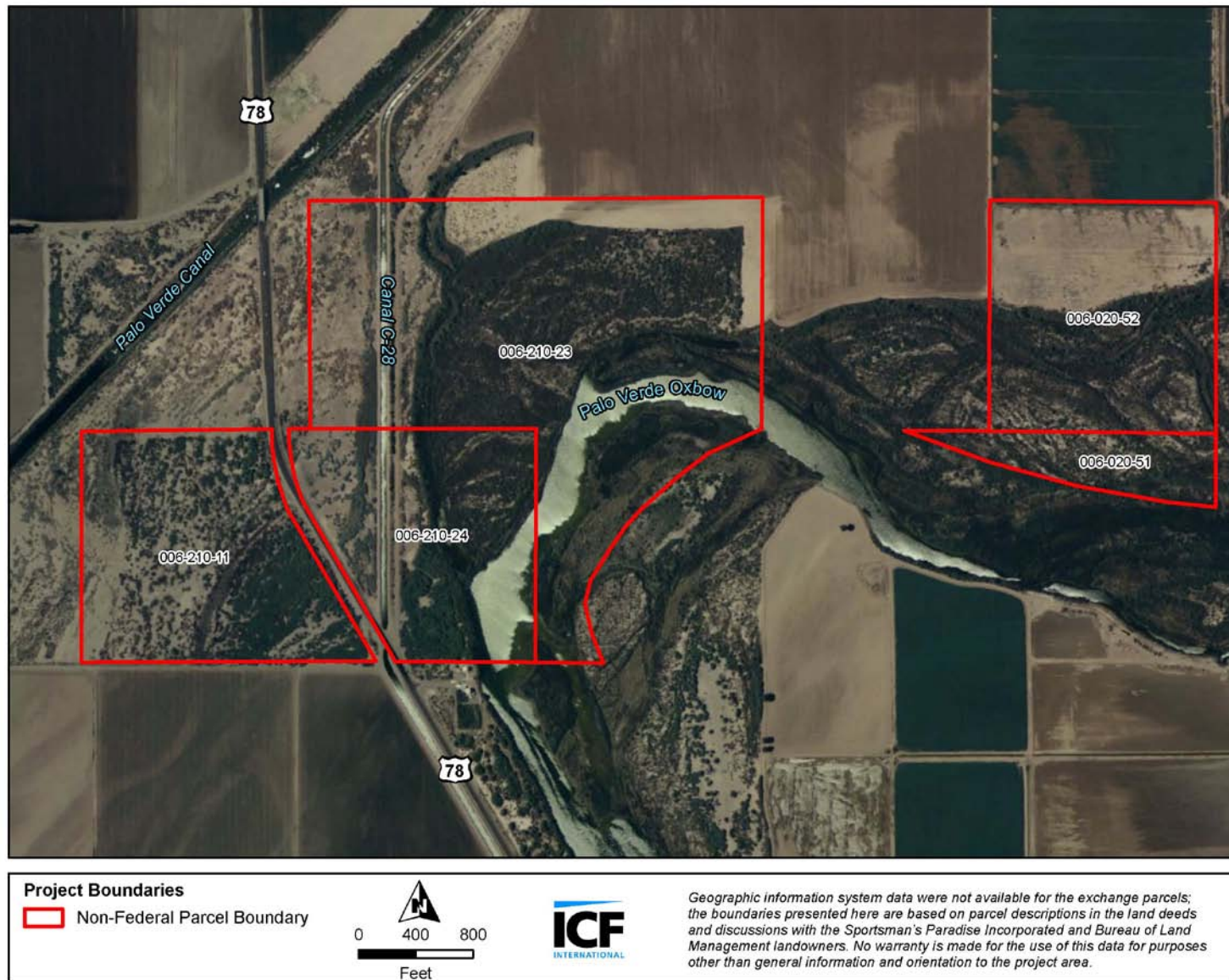


Figure 3. Non-Federal Parcels (Sportsman's Paradise Parcels)



**View of Harvey's Fishing Hole looking northeast from the south side (Arizona)
of the Colorado River**



View of residential area within Harvey's Fishing Hole



View of Parcel 006-210-11-01 looking west across Highway 78



View of Parcel 006-210-24-01 looking south from east of the irrigation canal



View of parcel 006-020-52-01 looking south across emergent wetlands associated with the oxbow



View of parcel 006-020-52-01 looking east at former agricultural field from northwest corner



View of Parcel 006-210-23-01 looking east from western edge



View of disturbed portion of parcel 006-210-23-01 looking west from northern boundary



***Sportsman's Paradise Land Exchange
Environmental Assessment***

Appendix B

Public Scoping Comments

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Public Scoping Comments

1001



Sportsman's Paradise Land Exchange

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS.

Please submit your comments at this public scoping meeting.

Please tell us how we can reach you:

Name: Greg Sprauls Organization: _____
Address: 1073 La Palma
City: Blythe State: CA Zip: 92225

Please note that all submissions will be made available for public inspection in their entirety. Your name and address will become part of the public record. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law.

Please Print

Date: Aug 3, 2010

Moving to Cibola in 1966 ^{when I was 7} and watching the Colorado River being Rechannelled, I believe this Land exchange is a great idea. This ^{BLM} land has been occupied and enjoyed for ever. The exchange adds 200+ acres to BLM that ~~increases~~ adds value to the BLM. Please serious consider this Land Exchange. Thank You.
Greg Sprauls

1002



Sportsman's Paradise Land Exchange

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS.

Please submit your comments at this public scoping meeting.

Please tell us how we can reach you:

Name: DAVID BEICHNER Organization: SPI
Address: 11475 E. BELK LN.
City: SCOTTSDALE State: AZ Zip: 85255

Please note that all submissions will be made available for public inspection in their entirety. Your name and address will become part of the public record. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law.

Please Print

Date: 8/3/10

I AM IN TOTAL SUPPORT OF THE POTENTIAL
LAND EXCHANGE WITH THE BLM & HARVEY'S FISHING
HOLE. I HAVE BEEN A RESIDENT OF LOT #86
AT HARVEY'S SINCE 1964. MY FAMILY & IN-LAWS
HAVE ENJOYED THE RECREATION AND PURE ENJOYMENT
OF HARVEY'S FOR MORE 45 YEARS. WE ONCE CALLED
IT OUR OWN HOME, AND WOULD BE PROUD TO
CLAIM A LEGAL TITLE TO IT ONCE AGAIN. PLEASE
CONSIDER OUR REQUEST FOR EXCHANGE. WE ARE ALL
GETTING OLDER, AND LOOK FORWARD TO THE COMPLETION
OF THE EXCHANGE DURING OUR LIFE TIME.

1003



Sportsman's Paradise Land Exchange

**THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS.**

Please submit your comments at this public scoping meeting.

Please tell us how we can reach you:

Name: Jennifer Lambert Organization: _____
Address: 704 E. Chansloway _____
City: Blythe State: Ca Zip: 92225

Please note that all submissions will be made available for public inspection in their entirety. Your name and address will become part of the public record. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law.

Please Print

Date: 8-3-10

I am part of the public and I
have lived in Ca and Cibola az.
split for 30 years. I feel
like this is a great idea for
the environment

1004



Sportsman's Paradise Land Exchange

**THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS.**

Please submit your comments at this public scoping meeting.

Please tell us how we can reach you:

Name: Justin Hamblin Organization: San Mateo High
Address: 704 E. Chanslorway
City: Blythe State: CA Zip: 92225

Please note that all submissions will be made available for public inspection in their entirety. Your name and address will become part of the public record. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law.

Please Print

Date: 8-3-10

I Think the land exchange would be a positive idea. The reason being is there is more space and empty land in Palo Verde for the sportsman's paradise BLM its a more less land polutant place and less stuff to tear down. Cibola is already a fun, family environment that doesn't need any extras.

1005



Sportsman's Paradise Land Exchange

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS.

Please submit your comments at this public scoping meeting.

Please tell us how we can reach you:

Name: MIKE HENDREX Organization: SPI
Address: 2239 GRENADIER DRIVE
City: SAN PEDRO State: CA Zip: 90732

Please note that all submissions will be made available for public inspection in their entirety. Your name and address will become part of the public record. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law.

Please Print

Date: 8/3/2010

THIS EXCHANGE WOULD BENEFIT BOTH THE BLM &
THE PEOPLE AT HARVEY'S FISHING HOLE. THE BLM WOULD
BE RECEIVING LAND FOR HABITAT PURPOSES & THE PEOPLE
AT HARVEY'S WOULD BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN THEIR HOMES. IT
WOULD ALSO BE AN ADDITIONAL TAX BASE FOR THE COUNTY
OF IMPERIAL. THE BLM WOULD RECEIVE 70 ACRES OF
WATER WITHIN THE PVID. I VERY MUCH ENCOURAGE
THIS EXCHANGE

1006



Sportsman's Paradise Land Exchange

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS.

Please submit your comments at this public scoping meeting.

Please tell us how we can reach you:

Name: HOWARD R. SMOOT Organization: SPORTSMAN'S PARADISE
Address: P.O. BOX 717
City: BLYTHE State: CA Zip: 92226

Please note that all submissions will be made available for public inspection in their entirety. Your name and address will become part of the public record. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law.

Please Print

Date: _____

BEING A RESIDENT OF HARVEYS FISHING HOLE
HAS BEEN A REWARDING EXPERIENCE. I
SUPPORT THE LAND EXCHANGE WHOLE
HEARTEDLY & IF I CAN DO ANYTHING TO
ASSIST PLEASE CONTACT ME.

RESIDENCE PHONE: 760 854-3409

E-MAIL: hasmoot@wildblue.net

1007



Sportsman's Paradise Land Exchange

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS.

Please submit your comments at this public scoping meeting.

Please tell us how we can reach you:

Name: Keith Coleros Organization: SPI
Address: 2153 Florence Blvd.
City: Blythe State: CA Zip: 92225

Please note that all submissions will be made available for public inspection in their entirety. Your name and address will become part of the public record. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law.

Please Print

Date: _____

Please pass this Land Exchange
IT has been a long time IT IS
good for both sides

1008



Sportsman's Paradise Land Exchange

**THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS.**

Please submit your comments at this public scoping meeting.

Please tell us how we can reach you:

Name: WUE COLERUS Organization: SPI
Address: 2153 FLORENCE BLVD
City: BLYTHE State: CA Zip: 92225

Please note that all submissions will be made available for public inspection in their entirety. Your name and address will become part of the public record. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law.

Please Print

Date: 8-3-10

I CAN'T WAIT FOR THIS EXCHANGE TO TAKE PLACE. I HAVE
BEEN ON THE RIVER SINCE 1959. WE HAVE RAISED OUR KIDS AT
SPI (HARVEYS) AND WOULD LOVE TO SEE THEIR KIDS HAVE THE
EXPERIENCE OF THE RIVER FAMILY LIFE.
PLEASE DO ALL YOU CAN TO HURRY THIS PROCESS ALONG.

1009



Sportsman's Paradise Land Exchange

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS.

Please submit your comments at this public scoping meeting.

Please tell us how we can reach you:

Name: Jennifer Beichner Organization: _____
Address: 11475 E. Beck Lane (#86 Lot @ Sportsman's Paradise)
City: Scottsdale State: AZ Zip: 85255

Please note that all submissions will be made available for public inspection in their entirety. Your name and address will become part of the public record. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law.

Please Print

Date: 8/3/2010

My family has been on this property since 1964. Sportsman's Paradise otherwise known to some of us by "Harvey's Fishing Hole" has seen generations grow up and prosper around this property. I am in full support of the land exchange with the full knowledge of the history and struggle the current conditions and restrictions of a continued lease put on all the residents. We ask that this exchange take place as quickly as possible is a positive result for the residents of Sportsman Paradise. Thank you very much

1010



Sportsman's Paradise Land Exchange

**THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS.**

Please submit your comments at this public scoping meeting.

Please tell us how we can reach you:

Name: Laura Hammerle Organization: SPT
Address: 25100 Woodward Ave
City: Van Nuys State: CA Zip: 91411

Please note that all submissions will be made available for public inspection in their entirety. Your name and address will become part of the public record. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law.

Please Print

Date: 8-2-10

The environmental impact of the land exchange will positively add to the safe-keeping of the environment. All existing natural resources, species, plants and animals will have no negative impact as a result of the land exchange. The government and society will continue to thrive in the natural beauty of the desert as it exists today.

1011



Sportsman's Paradise Land Exchange

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS.

Please submit your comments at this public scoping meeting.

Please tell us how we can reach you:

Name: Jon Lindquist Organization: SPI
Address: 220 Harbor Blvd.
City: Blythe State: CA Zip: 92225

Please note that all submissions will be made available for public inspection in their entirety. Your name and address will become part of the public record. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law.

Please Print

Date: 8-3-10

I Feel This is a win-win situation for both
parties - pristine wetlands for the BLM & homesites
for SPI.

1012



Sportsman's Paradise Land Exchange

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS.

Please submit your comments at this public scoping meeting.

Please tell us how we can reach you:

Name: Laurie Lindquist Organization: SPI
Address: 220 Harbor Blvd.
City: Blythe State: CA Zip: 92225

Please note that all submissions will be made available for public inspection in their entirety. Your name and address will become part of the public record. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law.

Please Print

Date: 8-3-2010

I fully support the Land exchange at
"Sportsman's Paradise". I feel everyone
would benefit from this exchange.

1013



Sportsman's Paradise Land Exchange

**THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS.**

Please submit your comments at this public scoping meeting.

Please tell us how we can reach you:

Name: Donna Gernert Organization: SP
Address: 143 Anchor Ave
City: Blythe State: CA Zip: 92225

Please note that all submissions will be made available for public inspection in their entirety. Your name and address will become part of the public record. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law.

Please Print

Date: Aug 3, 2010

I do support the BLM Land Exchange

1014



Sportsman's Paradise Land Exchange

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS.

Please submit your comments at this public scoping meeting.

Please tell us how we can reach you:

Name: Dan Dinsmore Organization: SP'
Address: Lot # Anchor Ave
City: Blythe State: CA Zip: 92225

Please note that all submissions will be made available for public inspection in their entirety. Your name and address will become part of the public record. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law.

Please Print

Date: 7-3-10

I do support the Land Exchange

1015



Sportsman's Paradise Land Exchange

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS.

Please submit your comments at this public scoping meeting.

Please tell us how we can reach you:

Name: JOLETH ALLEN Organization: SP

Address: 143 ANCAHOR AVE

City: BLUMING State: CA Zip: 92225

Please note that all submissions will be made available for public inspection in their entirety. Your name and address will become part of the public record. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law.

Please Print

Date: 8-3-10

I DO SUPPORT THIS LAND EXCHANGE.

I JUST HOPE I LIVE LONG ENOUGH. I HAVE
WATCHED MY FRIENDS DIE, ONE BY ONE.

Joletta (T. Ann)

1016



Sportsman's Paradise Land Exchange

**THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS.**

Please submit your comments at this public scoping meeting.

Please tell us how we can reach you:

Name: PETER ODEHARA Organization: SP

Address: 143 ANCHOR W.

City: BRYAN State: CA Zip: 92225

Please note that all submissions will be made available for public inspection in their entirety. Your name and address will become part of the public record. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law.

Please Print

Date: 8-3-10

I SUPPORT THE LAND EXCHANGE

1017



Sportsman's Paradise Land Exchange

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS.

Please submit your comments at this public scoping meeting.

Please tell us how we can reach you:

Name: Clarence Knight Jr Organization: SPI
Address: 20219 Jersey Ave
City: Lakewood State: CO Zip: 90715

Please note that all submissions will be made available for public inspection in their entirety. Your name and address will become part of the public record. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law.

Please Print

Date: 8/3/10

In total support of Land X change
been here since 1971 - get the kids out of LA.
keeps them out of Trouble and teaches them
about nature

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Clarence Knight Jr", written on lined paper.

1018



Sportsman's Paradise Land Exchange

**THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS.**

Please submit your comments at this public scoping meeting.

Please tell us how we can reach you:

Name: KIRK FINDLEY Organization: _____

Address: 23805 STRANGE CREEK DRIVE

City: DIAMOND BLM State: CA Zip: 91765

Please note that all submissions will be made available for public inspection in their entirety. Your name and address will become part of the public record. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law.

Please Print

Date: 08-03-10

I SUPPORT THIS LAND EXCHANGE. IT IS GOOD FOR
THE BLM, GOOD FOR THE RESIDENTS OF SPORTSMAN'S
PARADISE, AND GREAT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT!

THE SOONER, THE BETTER

KRF

1019



Sportsman's Paradise Land Exchange

**THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS.**

Please submit your comments at this public scoping meeting.

Please tell us how we can reach you:

Name: Ray & Jean Organization: SPI
Address: 338 Red Vista Ct. (165 Starboard Lane Blythe Ca)
City: Sierra Vista State: CA Zip: _____

Please note that all submissions will be made available for public inspection in their entirety. Your name and address will become part of the public record. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law.

Please Print

Date: 2/3/10

We are very much in favor of the Land exchange.
The exchange will benefit not only the members of SPI
But also the BLM in receiving the land and not
for wildlife (acres).
The community will also benefit financially
from the exchange, bringing revenue from
the residents of SPI to Blythe & Palo Verde.

1020



Sportsman's Paradise Land Exchange

**THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS.**

Please submit your comments at this public scoping meeting.

Please tell us how we can reach you:

Name: Bryant Sutterfield Organization: none
Address: 491 Montezuma ST.
City: Blythe State: CA Zip: 92225

Please note that all submissions will be made available for public inspection in their entirety. Your name and address will become part of the public record. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law.

Please Print

Date: 8/3/10

I have lived in Blythe all of my life and
have been able to enjoy using Sportsman's Paradise.
It's a great place to fish, boat and hang out
with family and friends, and I think it
would be great if other people in Blythe
and the surrounding areas to enjoy the same
thing.



Sportsman's Paradise Land Exchange

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS.

Please submit your comments at this public scoping meeting.

Please tell us how we can reach you:

Name: Karen S. Sprawls Organization: Sportsman's Paradise
Address: 1013 La Palma
City: Blythe State: CA Zip: 92225

Please note that all submissions will be made available for public inspection in their entirety. Your name and address will become part of the public record. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law.

Please Print

Date: 8/3/2010

I believe this is a positive step for the community of Blythe. I am a lifelong Blythorian and the river ~~here~~ holds a special place in my heart. I believe that this land exchange would be a vital step in promoting Blythe as a recreational paradise for many to enjoy.

Marlene Piper 1022
10922 Woodland Ave.
Garden Grove
Ca. 92840
8-13-10



Mrs. Nathan Wagner
Re: Sportsman's Paradise Exchange

Dear Mrs. Wagner,

I personally feel that this
exchange will be very beneficial
to both parties.

I am in favor for the
exchange between Sportsman's
Paradise and BLM.

Sincerely,
Marlene Piper

C.C. Vanessa
Realty Spec
Yuma, Az.



1023

08/13/10

To: Nathan Wagoner
ICF International
8310 South Valley Highway – Suite 240
Englewood, CO. 80112-5806

To: Vanessa Briceño
Realty Specialist
BLM Yuma Field Office
2555 E. Gila Ridge Road
Yuma, AZ 85365

From: Gary H Hall, and Charlene Hall

We are lessee's at Harvey Fishing Hole outside of Blythe California. Our address at Harvey's is: 178 Starboard Lane – lot #50. We have been involved with the "Land Exchange" since the process first began. We would like to see the exchange process completed as per the agreement between Sportsman's Paradise Inc and the BLM.

Sincerely,
Gary & Charlene Hall
2076 Gibson Peak Place
Payson, AZ 85541
928-474-4549

1024

August 18, 2010

Vanessa Briceno
Realty Specialist
BLM Yuma Field Office
2555 E. Gila Ridge Road
Yuma, AZ 85365

Nathan Wagoner
ICF International
8310 South Valley Highway, Suite 240
Englewood, CO 80112-5806

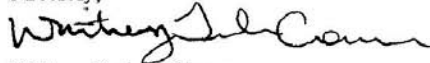
Dear Ms. Briceno and Mr. Wagoner:

This letter is to express my support for the land exchange between BLM and Sportsman's Paradise.

My grandparents built their home at Sportsman's Paradise almost 40 years ago and it is a rich part of my family's history. Unfortunately, my grandparents have both passed away in the last few years and they were not able to see the land exchange come to fruition. They left this world without having closure.

I write this letter in the memory of my grandparents and with hope that my children and grandchildren will be able to experience the life that they built at Sportsman's Paradise.

Sincerely,



Whitney Trulove-Cranor
11815 Stuart Place
Westminster, CO 80031
whitneytrulove@aol.com

1025

Monday 8/23/2010

Dear Mr Wagoner,


We are property owners at Sportsmans Paradise Old Harveys fishing Hole

We have three river lots that have been in the family for almost 50 years.

And we support the BLM land swap.

Regards,

Tim and Karen Trulove

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JRD' followed by a long horizontal line.

***Sportsman's Paradise Land Exchange
Environmental Assessment***

Appendix C

Native American Coordination and Consultation

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The example letter templates contained in this appendix were sent to the following Native American tribes:

- Ak-Chin Indian Community
- Chehemuevi Indian Tribe
- Cocopah Indian Tribe
- Colorado River Indian Tribes
- Fort Mojave Indian Tribe
- Fort Yuma - Quechan Tribe
- Gila River Indian Community
- The Hopi Tribe
- Hualapai Tribe
- Pueblo of Zuni
- Salt River Pima - Maricopa Indian Community
- Tohono O'odham Tribal Nation
- Yavapai - Apache Nation
- Yavapai - Prescott Indian Tribe

June 18, 2008 Notice of Exchange Proposal Letter

In Reply Refer To:
CAAZCA 43672 (AZ-320)

June 18, 2008

CERTIFIED MAIL – RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED,

Name
Address
City, State, Zipcode

Dear Name:

This letter is to inform you that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is considering a proposal to exchange land pursuant to Section 206 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended. On April 14, 2008, the BLM entered into an agreement with Sportsman's Paradise, Incorporated to initiate the land exchange. A map of the lands considered for exchange is enclosed.

Enclosed is a Notice of the Exchange Proposal (Notice) that was signed by the BLM on June 9, 2008. The Notice will be published in the Palo Verde Valley Times newspaper starting Wednesday, June 18, 2008, once a week for four consecutive weeks. The purposes of the Notice are as follows:

- Advise you of the opportunity to participate in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process by inviting comments on the land exchange proposal. The NEPA process will include the identification of the resources and assessment of impacts associated with the proposed land exchange and any alternatives. The NEPA process will be a primary forum for assessing the public interest served by the exchange of lands.
- Notify you and other authorized users who may have interests in or claims against the Federal and non-Federal land. The notice serves to ensure identification of all such interests for proper assessment of title to the properties and to ensure consideration of all affected interests as a part of assessing the effects of the exchange proposal.
- Provide notice to State and local governments, and congressional delegations having jurisdiction over the land in the exchange proposal.

Comments received in response to the Notice will be analyzed and considered during the land exchange processing. In order to ensure consideration in the environmental analysis (NEPA) of the proposed exchange, written comments to the Field Manager should be postmarked or delivered by August 2, 2008, (45 days from the date of the first publication of the Notice). Interested parties may submit comments regarding the land exchange proposal, including notification of any liens, encumbrances, or other claims relating to the lands being considered for

exchange to James T. Shoaff, Field Manager, at the above address by August 2, 2008. The enclosed Notice is not a decision, and is not subject to protest or appeal.

If you have any questions, please contact Realty Specialist Francisca Mueller at 928-317-3237.

Sincerely,

James T. Shoaff
Field Manager

Enclosures

January 19, 2011- Native American Consultation Letter

In Reply Refer To:
CAAZCA 43672
2200

CERTIFIED MAIL – RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED, 7008 1140 0002 7302 «cert»

«name», «title»
«tribe»
«add1»
«csz»

Dear «Addressline»:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Yuma Field Office, would like to initiate consultation with you regarding a proposal to exchange land pursuant to Section 206 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended. The BLM previously sent a letter in June 2008 advising you of the proposed exchange involving the BLM and Sportsman's Paradise Incorporated, inviting you to comment as part of the National Environmental Policy Act process, and providing you with a copy of the Notice of Exchange Proposal (NOEP). This purpose of this letter is to further invite you to comment on this proposed action in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act and the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, to ensure that all of your community's concerns are carefully considered.

The proposed exchange involves a 27.82-acre parcel of federal land containing a residential development known as Harvey's Fishing Hole and five privately-owned parcels totaling 225.85 acres. The federal parcel is located in Section 9, Township 9 South, Range 22 East, San Bernardino Meridian, Imperial County, California (Palo Verde, California/Arizona, USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle) while the five private parcels are located in Sections 11 & 12, Township 9 South, Range 21 East, San Bernardino Meridian, Imperial County, California (Palo Verde, California/Arizona, USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle). Please see the enclosed project map for additional information on the project location.

As part of BLM's NEPA compliance, an Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared to address a number of environmental issues. At a minimum, the EA will discuss the existing conditions of biological resources (plants, wildlife, threatened and endangered species, and livestock), cultural resources (archaeological sites, historic sites, and traditional cultural places), and physical resources (surface and ground waters, water use, air quality, visual resources, noise, hazardous waste, etc.) and the environmental consequences of each alternative on those resources.

To help in preparation of the EA and to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), CRM TECH conducted both a review of previous cultural resources work in the Area of Potential Effect (APE) for the undertaking and an intensive cultural resources survey of the proposed project area. The review revealed that 18 archaeological surveys were conducted and two archaeological sites were recorded within a 1-mile radius of the project. Several of the previous surveys included portions of the project area; however both recorded sites were well outside the current APE. The survey identified two new sites within the project area. Site CA-IMP-11154H, a historic-period household refuse dump, was identified on one of the private parcels, and Harvey's Fishing Hole, a series of historic single-family residences or converted residences, was identified and recorded on the federal parcel. CRM TECH recommended both sites as not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (a copy of the cultural report is either included with this mailing or is available upon request).

As mentioned above, the BLM wishes to obtain your comments to ensure that your community's concerns are carefully considered in agency decision-making. In particular, we hope that you will let us know if there are any resources or places of traditional cultural or religious importance to members of your community that might be affected by the proposed land exchange. If there are other tribal members you feel should be included by BLM in consultation, please provide us with their names, addresses, and telephone numbers so we can contact them directly. Thank you for consideration of this request.

If you would like to arrange a meeting, a project area visit, or would like additional information, please contact the Yuma Field Office Archaeologist, Tom Jones by mail, telephone (928-317-3239) or email at Thomas_K_Jones@blm.gov or the Yuma Field Office Assistant Field Manager, Karen Reichhardt by mail, telephone (928-317-3200), or by email at Karen_Reichhardt@blm.gov.

Sincerely,

James T. Shoaff
Field Manager

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